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Foreign Minister David Levy (right) meets yesterday at the Foreign Ministry with US Ambassador Martin Indyk. Levy said the US should "not lend a hand to the drama orchestrated by Arafat which is aimed at putting Israel on trial," according to an Israeli official. Indyk said US Consul-General Edward Abington would attend the international meeting in Gaza planned for Saturday. (Reuters)

Inner cabinet to meet over crisis

By JON IMMANUEL, LIAT COLLINS, HILLEL KUTTNER, and news agencies

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is to convene the inner cabinet today to discuss the growing crisis with the Palestinians, including Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's intention of holding an international conference in Gaza this weekend on the peace process.

Netanyahu, who returned last night from a two-day visit to Russia, is to confer with Foreign Minister David Levy before the cabinet meeting for an update on Levy's meeting with US Ambassador Martin Indyk. He is also to meet with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai regarding his visit to Jordan and his talks with settlers over the implementation of the first phase of the IDF pullback in Judea and Samaria.

Netanyahu said yesterday he was "fed up" with accusations that Israeli actions were hurting the chances for peace in the Middle East.

meeting for Saturday in the Gaza Strip, Arafat told reporters in English: "To protect the peace process... and to face the breaching of [the agreement by] the Israelis."

The US, Israel's closest ally, on Tuesday tightened the noose of international pressure by agreeing to send an envoy to the meeting.



"Chairman Arafat obviously feels the need to talk to friendly countries around the world, and that's appropriate," said State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns.

The US supports the meeting, another senior administration figure said in Washington, because it is an opportunity for the Palestinians to vent their anger regarding recent Israeli decisions on Har Homa and further redeployment.

This is especially so after the US vetoed last Friday's UN Security Council decision condemning the planned construction of a Jewish neighborhood on Jerusalem's Har Homa.

A second US official said the administration does not view Arafat's event as a "conference," but as a "meeting of the counties present at the signing of the interim agreement."

"We do not regard this as a mechanism for resolving disputes. That has to be done by the parties," he said.

Representatives of the US, Russia, the European Union, Japan, Norway, Egypt, and Jordan are expected to attend the meeting.

Meanwhile, while Arafat may be boycotting the government, he welcomed more than 100 Israeli businessmen to Gaza yesterday. The meeting with the group of businessmen signified that social relations with Israel, and continuing relations at military level, were not to be confused with government-to-government problems, since Arafat is convinced that Israeli public opinion and even the IDF supports his position.

Addressing the group in a large

room in his Gaza headquarters, he spoke about the need for a "peace of the brave." He did not mention Netanyahu, with whom he is currently refusing to speak, but talked about the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. "We should walk in his footsteps," he said.

Although the meeting is not the Madrid-style international conference which Foreign Minister David Levy said Tuesday could lead to a freezing of the peace process, it is clear that Arafat wants it to create an international consensus. That would make it easier to confront what he considers to be unilateral Israeli decisions, which strengthen Netanyahu's position in his government by humiliating him.

"We've got to negotiate from the position of equals," Ami Leshin, a Labor Party organizer who brought the businessmen to Gaza, quoted PA officials as saying.

PA cabinet secretary Ahmed Abdel-Rahman denied that the opportunity for the Palestinians to vent their anger regarding recent Israeli decisions on Har Homa and further redeployment.

"I'm getting, frankly, fed up with the idea that everything we do is a violation of the [peace] agreement, and everything the Palestinians say is in compliance with the agreement," he told a news conference at the end of his visit to Moscow.

"A few months ago we were accused of borrowing a tunnel under the Al Aksa Mosque - pro-terrorist fabrication," Netanyahu said. "It should have been thrown out by the international community, thrown out by the international press. It was given credence, this lie."

"I'm not going to accept this same kind of approach again and again," he said. "If the Palestinians are serious about peace, let them sit down with us. If they are serious about airing their differences, let them sit down with us."

"Every time we do something that is out, in their eyes, what they want, they don't say 'Let's come to the table,'... they immediately create a crisis," Netanyahu said.

Arafat said yesterday he hopes a meeting of US, European, and Arab envoys would rescue Middle East peace from a crisis over Israeli settlement plans in the West Bank.

Asked why he had called the

ANALYSIS

International conference or gimmick?

By DAVID MAKOVSKY

When the Madrid peace conference convened in 1991, the glittering, historic gathering was attended by, among others, then-US president George Bush, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, then-prime minister Yitzhak Shamir and foreign ministers of surrounding Arab countries, including Syria and Lebanon.

The rules of Madrid were crafted carefully over many months, as Israel sought to ensure that such an august body not impose a peace deal, but rather allow negotiations to unfold directly.

This week, the Palestinians have announced they are convening an "international conference" in Gaza, but it does not resemble Madrid in any fashion.

On one hand, Israel should view the meeting as expressing broad international concern about the future of the peace process and, therefore, not be dismissive.

But it would be a major error to elevate this meeting into some form of Madrid II. While the Palestinians want to conjure up this association, it is in fact more like a glorified public relations briefing that Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat will be holding for ambassadors and consul-generals with a little pomp, long-winded speeches and perhaps a statement at the end, but even this is unclear.

As Labor leader Shimon Peres bristled yesterday, "Arafat has met with diplomats many times before, so he will do it one more time. This does not make it an international conference."

US Ambassador Martin Indyk was cited as saying in a meeting with Foreign Minister David Levy yesterday, "This is a periodic meeting that Arafat has in Gaza. Nothing more." He later said it was "ridiculous" to call it an international conference.

The Palestinians are looking for gimmicky media mileage and hope to find it by calling

this an "international conference." Their interest is understandable. What is less understandable is that Israel, in the words of one western diplomat, "is playing into Arafat's hands" by denouncing the event as an international conference when it is little more than a briefing.

Once Foreign Minister David Levy slammed the session as an "international conference" that Israel would fight since it could "freeze the peace process," the story was blared on the front pages. By highlighting the issue, Levy gave Arafat another success, as if he were able to summon heads of state from throughout the world at a minute's notice to an "international conference."

Only yesterday in Moscow, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu lowered the tone, saying he would not object if Arafat held yet another briefing for diplomats.

It is not in Israel's interest to turn an Arafat gimmick into something it is definitely not.

Haredim harass Jehovah's Witnesses

By HAIM SHAPIRO

A congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Lod has been the victim of a campaign of violent harassment by haredim, apparently Habad hassidim. This culminated Saturday night, when a mob ransacked the congregation's meeting hall and sang and danced around a bonfire of Bibles and religious literature, members of the Christian congregation reported yesterday.

The Jehovah's Witnesses believe it is their religious duty to convince others of the truth of their beliefs.

"What we do is go around and talk to people about the Bible," said Mark Einstein, a spokesman for the movement. He said it has 750 to 800 active members, with another 1,000 who attend services. The Lod congregation, which is adjacent to a Habad neighborhood and school, has about 50 members.

According to Albin Neupert, a member of the Lod group, the first attacks on the congregation began in November. Then, he said, there was quiet until another attack came two weeks ago on Saturday night.

As one family tried to leave, they were met with a barrage of stones. A man, 60, was hit in the head and had to be taken to the hospital for treatment. Members of the group called the police from inside, but the squad car arrived with only two policemen,

who could not control the mob, Neupert said.

Eventually, he added, three more police cars arrived, but they, too, could do nothing. The police finally told the worshippers to leave despite the stone-throwing. The worshippers, who filed a complaint with the police, were told that one man had been detained and then released.

During the next few days, Neupert said, the harassment continued with graffiti daubed on the building.

This past Saturday night there was no one in the hall, but witnesses from a nearby building reported that a mob of over 200 people dressed in haredi garb attacked the building, Neupert said the scene was one of total destruction. Chairs, the platform, the speaker's stand, the amplifying system and the acoustic tiles from the ceiling were all smashed in what appeared to be a frenzy of destruction, he said.

Neupert said that, according to a witness, the attackers sang and danced for about two hours around a bonfire of literature and Bibles from the hall. According to the witnesses, the attackers sang, "Long live the messiah, the king."

Ramle-Lod deputy police chief Yossi Boker said the police had been called by bystanders. When officers arrived, he said, a crowd was still present but it was impossible to identify specific individuals as the assailants. The following day, he said, he had called in three rabbis from the neighborhood and warned them that if there was any interference with anyone's right to worship, the police would act to uphold the law.

IBA news fights for survival

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

The Israel Broadcasting Authority's English news staffers are mounting a campaign to prevent the reported plans for their department's closure and the end of its daily English-language news broadcasts.

Israel Television head Yair Stern reportedly proposed shutting down IBA English News in an internal IBA document, as part of a series of steps he outlined recently to meet tightened IBA budgets.

"According to a report in the Hebrew press, Stern said the program costs NIS 1.5 million a year, plus 500 overtime hours a month. He suggested the broadcasts could be replaced by a five-minute daily news bulletin produced by the Hebrew department. Alternately, he suggested having the English news financed by the Tourism or Foreign Ministry."

But acting English news editor Steve Leibowitz said, "Doing away with the IBA [English] News would be an easy solution, rather than tackling the real problem - the elements in the building which don't produce what they cost."

Leibowitz said Stern "is just looking for ways to cut costs, to meet his budget," but noted that the English news department had already done its share after being asked to make cuts. He said reporter Sharon Isaac had left and was not replaced, while

senior political correspondent David Essing "was forced to go back to the radio" and would not be replaced either.

He added that the pool of 30 freelance-journalist days a month used to produce the broadcasts had been cut to 20, meaning staffers were now doing two or three times the amount of work they did before.

Leibowitz said the cost of IBA News in 1996 was NIS 1,724,000, while its 1997 budget stands at NIS 1.2m., although the departure of Essing and Isaac made it even less than that.

Leibowitz and his fellow staffers were incensed over not being called in to discuss the proposed closure of the department. Instead, they read about it in the newspaper.

"That's not the way to treat workers," Leibowitz said.

An Israel Television spokesman said there were no operative plans yet to close down the department. The IBA English News was founded in September 1990, and is the country's only English-language television newscast. It airs a 15-minute broadcast at 6:15 on weekdays, and a 10-minute broadcast on Fridays and Saturdays.

It counts among its viewers tourists, diplomats, the foreign press and the estimated 100,000 native English-speakers in Israel. Staffers say the program also is watched regularly by Palestinians in the territories, and in Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Kahalani to consult A-G on closing PA offices

By ELLI WOHLGELERTER and LIAT COLLINS

Minister of Internal Security Avigdor Kahalani will consult today with Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein on the legality of closing four Palestinian offices in eastern Jerusalem.

Kahalani said yesterday the four offices under threat of closure are controlled by the Palestinian Authority, but as of last night he had not yet decided whether to close them.

"They are controlled by the PA, and I can tell you that the people who are working there get their salary from the PA and they are working for the PA," said Kahalani. "We have enough reason to close these offices."

"We are not looking to embarrass them or to try to work against the PA, but with all due respect towards them, they have to keep the agreement that we signed in Oslo. It is written that they are not allowed to work from Jerusalem."

The four offices are the Office for Small Projects, the Committee for the Wounded, the Welfare and Development Committee and the Office of National Institutions.

Final arguments against the closing of the offices were presented yesterday by PA legal representative Jawad Boulos to the ministry. Boulos had first met with legal representatives of the ministry on Monday to present

documents proving that the four offices were not affiliated with the PA.

Kahalani discussed the offices with the Knesset Interior Committee yesterday.

"I'm not scared to close them. I'll do it happily, but only in accordance with the law," Kahalani told the committee.

Continued on Page 3

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Gov't awaits OK for Har Homa

By ELLI WOHLGELERTER

The government will not begin building on Har Homa Sunday, because it wants to wait until after the High Court of Justice hears four petitions against the construction.

The court is scheduled to meet on Wednesday to hear the appeals. Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush (United Torah Judaism) told the Knesset Interior Committee yesterday his ministry is prepared to begin work. Contracts have been signed with a construction firm, but Porush said work would not begin until the petitions have been heard, even though no injunction has been issued.

Asked about threats of violence over Har Homa, Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani said: "Anyone who grows tired of the struggle for Jerusalem should ask himself what he is doing here. The police are good and there are sufficient forces, and we are prepared for whatever we need to be prepared for. The struggle for Jerusalem is at a height at the moment, and the Har Homa construction is part of that struggle."

An injunction barring construction was requested on February 27 by MKs Haim Oron (Meretz) and

Avraham Poraz (Shinui-Meretz), the day after the government's ministerial committee on Jerusalem gave approval for building on Har Homa. The justice on duty postponed hearing that petition, moving instead to have the petition combined with two others that had previously been filed, and to have the petitions heard by a panel of three judges.

Following the judge's decision, the permit to begin construction on Har Homa was signed later that day by Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai.

A fourth petition was then filed by Ir Shalem, an affiliate of Peace Now, on behalf of 29 people from Sur Bahir and Umm Tuba, according to Hagit Ya'ari, a spokeswoman for Peace Now. That appeal was combined with the other three.

The process by which building on Har Homa — or any new construction — can take place involves a 14-day waiting period after a building permit is signed. Then, work can begin. The 14-day period for Har Homa ends Sunday.

Ya'ari said the 14-day interval is the reason nothing has happened yet at Har Homa.

"When everyone said that [Prime Minister] Binyamin Netanyahu is caving in to the

international pressure [not to build], it wasn't true. He legally can't build until two weeks pass. It's standard for any building.

Moshe Eilat, an advisor to the Ministry of Construction and Housing, which is in charge of building on Har Homa, said his ministry is "ready and eager" to start construction.

However, Eilat said, the ministry does not want to start on Sunday, "because then they will stop us, and we don't want them to stop us and then start again. We want that everything will be clear from a legal point of view."

He said he was confident that the petition would be rejected.

Within a day of the end of any legal issues, Eilat said, bulldozers could arrive on Har Homa and begin tearing up the ground. That should take about two weeks, he said, after which construction on infrastructure and housing will commence.

The work will be contracted out by the Housing Ministry, he said, but the overall administration is in the ministry's hands.

"We are in charge of everything, from A to Z," Eilat said. "We are responsible for everything."

List Collins contributed to this report.



Roadblock detail

Soldiers set up a roadblock outside Bethlehem yesterday. Following protests in the town, the IDF barred entry to Israeli citizens for several hours in the afternoon, when dozens of Palestinian youths held a march past Rachel's Tomb. The youths had broken off from a nearby demonstration of some 1,000 Bethlehem residents against the settlements and construction plans for Har Homa.

(Brian Henderson)

Settlers, Mordechai meet over pullback

By MARGOT DUDKEWITCH

Settler leaders met with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai yesterday to give him a long list of proposals and "cosmetic changes" before the final maps of the Phase 1 withdrawal receive authorization.

The settlers also impressed upon Mordechai the necessity to involve them in discussions regarding future pullbacks, charging that as representatives of the areas where withdrawal will take place, "no one understands the needs of the communities better than they."

Attending the meeting at the Laromme Hotel were Pinhas Wallerstein, chairman of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, council director Aharon Domb and a majority of the mayors of all the regional and local councils that make up the communities. Accompanying Mordechai were Defense Ministry officials and top IDF officers, including OC Central Command Uzi Dayan.

The settlers' council raised 46 proposals and Mordechai agreed on 40, promising to examine the remaining six. According to council spokeswoman Yehudit Tayar, Mordechai was very receptive and endeavored to understand the difficulties facing the settlers in future withdrawals.

Although Tayar refused to divulge details of the proposals, she said the council's recommendations would not affect the amount of land transferred to the Palestinian Authority, but would improve the security problems faced by some settlements.

Two settlements facing isolation under the current pullback, said Tayar, are Karmeit Tzur and Yitzhar. Mordechai, she said, "basically agreed" to demands raised on behalf of Karmeit Tzur residents regarding the building of a 7 kilometer bypass road that would link up to Gush Etzion junction, thus keeping the settlers from having to travel through neighboring Beit Umar and Al-Arabat. Yitzhar, near Nablus, she said, is also extremely isolated.

Mordechai told reporters after the meeting that he understood the settlers' distress and according to the government's decision he was free to make amendments on the map. Mordechai added that the IDF and security forces were ready to redeploy despite the Palestinians recent demands and the summit planned for Saturday.

"We want to carry out the government's decision, and there is every chance that the Palestinian Authority will cooperate, even though they aren't satisfied with the size of the withdrawal."

IDF opens Netzarim road

By MARGOT DUDKEWITCH

Residents of the Netzarim settlement had difficulty comprehending an IDF decision to open the road running next to their settlement to all Palestinians yesterday.

The road that runs 20 meters from the settlement and continues towards the sea has been the source of clashes in the past when residents protested, fearing for their safety.

In 1994, prime minister Yitzhak Rabin ordered its closure after a bomb at Netzarim Junction killed 3 soldiers. Last December, the road was opened only to Palestinian Police and VIPs.

"I can't understand why the decision was made when things are so tense," said resident Shlomit Ziv, adding that the residents hadn't been informed of the decision and many had gone to work without even realizing the change. "I am sure this evening when people return home the issue will be discussed."

Head of the Gaza Regional Council Aharon Tzur said he had not been informed of the change either.

Peleg: UN is not a substitute for talks

By MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK — Israel accused the Palestinians of "dysfunctional behavior" yesterday as the UN General Assembly opened a debate that is expected to condemn the Har Homa project.

Israeli charge d'affaires David Peleg told the General Assembly that the UN is not the place to discuss "contentious" issues between Israel and the Palestinians.

"Israel, too, has grievances concerning Palestinian violations of our agreements," Peleg said in a speech to the assembly. "But we prefer not to misuse this body to air our concerns."

Speaking with reporters after his speech, Peleg repeated that disagreements should be resolved in direct talks between the two sides.

"Unfortunately, the Palestinians have fallen into dysfunctional behavior patterns" by turning to third parties, Peleg said.

If a resolution against Har Homa is passed, he said, "the result would be to encourage more extreme attitudes."

More than 30 speakers were scheduled to address the assembly yesterday. Israel was expected to face wide condemnation when the 185-member assembly votes on the Israeli plan to build 6,500 housing units in Jerusalem. That vote was expected today.

Last Friday, the US vetoed a resolution in which the Security Council would have opposed the Har Homa project. Arab states then sought the assembly session, although an assembly resolution would not be binding.

The PLO observer to the UN, Nasser al-Kidwa, called the Har Homa project a "colonial settlement" in "occupied Palestinian territory." He then went on to list what he called a series of Israeli violations of the status of Jerusalem, including the opening of the second entrance to the Western Wall Tunnel.

"There can be no peace in the Middle East without the restoration of our legal rights in Jerusalem," al-Kidwa said.

NEWSLINE with Dr. Menachem Klein, an expert on Palestinian affairs in the department of Political Science, Bar-Ilan University, and research fellow at the Jerusalem Institute.

Is there a real crisis, as opposed to a manufactured one, in relations between Israel and the Palestinians and if so to what extent?

There is a crisis of regional and international proportions in relations between Israel and America, as well as with Europe, Egypt and Jordan, and not just between Israel and the Palestinians. Its roots were in the government's decision over Har Homa and then the decisions taken over the first phase of redeployment in which the Palestinians had expected to receive more territory that would be under their sole control. The Palestinians virtually begged to be consulted on these issues, but the government refused. Since then the Palestinians have built up the crisis, but it is nonetheless real and serious.

What is the significance of the international conference on the Oslo accords, being organized by PA Chairman Yasser Arafat, which is due to be held in Gaza on Saturday?

For the first time, an international forum, which may have the potential for becoming a permanent forum, will be discussing the peace process and bilateral talks between Israel and its peace partners — without Israel actually taking part. The immediate meaning is that Israel is politically isolated. Although the significance of America's participation is being played down, it is meaningful because it is an indication of US displeasure with the government's policies. Furthermore, the forum could be used in the future as a lobby to put pressure on Israel, while Arafat will no doubt use the conference as a stepping stone towards achieving international recognition for his ultimate aim of turning the Palestinian Authority into a Palestinian state.

Is there a way out of the present crisis through some kind of formula or compromise that would prove acceptable to both Israel and the Palestinians?

Firstly, the government has to freeze the decision to begin construction work on Har Homa. This has become the main issue and potential flashpoint. Secondly, a summit meeting between the leaders of Israel, Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority, with the participation of the Americans, could be very useful in helping to renew the negotiations and direct dialogue, as well as being used as a step to re-building political confidence. If these two measures were to be adopted it could help take the wind out of the sails of the international conference in Gaza and deflate the growing feelings of anger and frustration among the Palestinian people themselves.

What is the likely outcome if these or other steps to reduce tension are not taken and the government adheres to its decisions?

If the government maintains its tough stance and there is no direct dialogue, there will undoubtedly be popular protests by the Palestinians against Israel. There have already been some minor confrontations on a local level as well as the bigger demonstrations. Arafat is trying to contain and control the situation and is keeping his police in their bases and not allowing them to participate in any of the protests as civilians. There is a genuine fear, however, that some of these demonstrations or protests could get out of hand and out of control and lead to violent clashes with bloody and tragic results. The crunch would no doubt come the minute the bulldozers move onto Har Homa.

Is there also concern, in such circumstances, of a renewal of Hamas and Islamic Jihad suicide and terror attacks?

There is a great deal of frustration and anger among the Palestinians, inflamed to some extent by the Palestinian media, over the situation at the moment. The attack on the soldier on guard duty at Tenek Omarim was an example of what appears to have been an initiative by individuals. If this mood continues to build up there is a danger of a renewal of terror attacks. Arafat, himself, may not give the go ahead for them, but Hamas could interpret the recent release of one of their radical leaders, as well as their participation in several political discussions with Arafat, as silent approval for such attacks.

David Rudge

With deep sorrow we announce the death of our beloved wife, mother, and grandmother

DOROTHY CANARD

Deeply mourned and sadly missed by:
Husband: Max
Sons: Russel, Steven,
David and Graeme
Daughters-in-law: Cheryl and Joanne
Grandchildren: Galit, Nadav, Aviv,
Talla, and Nicole

She will always be with us.

The funeral will take place today, Thursday, March 13, 1997, at 2 p.m. at Shikun Vatikim, Netanya.

Our deepest condolences to the Canard and Liebson Families on the death of

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your wife, mother, mother-in-law and grandmother, and our friend

ESRA — English Speaking Residents Association

Members of Nayot mourn the passing of a veteran resident

ESTHER PASSMAN EPSTEIN

survivor of the 1948 Mt. Scopus Convo and send sincere condolences to her son, David, and his wife, Deenna.

In deep sorrow we mourn the passing of our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

MILLIE GLEICHER

Gleicher and Knoll Families

Israeli Arab leaders to protest 'settlement policy'

By DAVID RUDGE

Jerusalem, nationwide demonstrations and even calls for a general strike of the Arab sector.

There are also calls for activities to be coordinated with Jewish peace activists and political parties, including Peace Now and left-wing groups.

The heads of the 53 Arab councils, as well as Arab MKs and leading public figures, are expected to attend the monitoring committee meeting, which will also discuss plans to mark Land Day at the end of this month.

Inbitawi said the decision to hold the meeting in Rahat was in solidarity with the problems facing Beduin families in the region, relating to land, housing shortages, poor infrastructure, unrecognized villages and other difficulties.

"The monitoring committee will discuss the situation and bow best the Arab public, as a peace force, can demonstrate in the Israeli sector for the aim of achieving a just peace which will respect the rights of Palestinians," said Inbitawi, who is also spokesman for Shfarim municipality.

The meeting is slated to discuss several proposals for measures to protest against the government's policies, including a mass rally in

Tarif takes ill after Zissman barb

By LIAT COLLINS

Knesset Interior Committee Chairman Salah Tarif (Labor) was taken ill during a stormy meeting about Har Homa yesterday and needed tranquilizers after another MK questioned his loyalty to the state.

Tarif was taken to the Knesset's clinic after a vehement exchange with Emanuel Zissman (Third Way), who accused him of betraying Labor party principles and favoring the Palestinians more than Israel. Zissman implied that Tarif's loyalty to the state was in doubt.

The argument erupted about 90 minutes into the meeting. The two MKs began screaming at each other.

Zissman told Tarif, "You don't even represent the left-wing of the Labor Party. Move to Hadash [the Arab and Communist party]. Move to the Democratic Arab Party. You've forgotten you are Druse. Where's your national pride? You prefer to believe the Palestinians than to believe a minister."

Tarif, drained of color, shouted back that he was in favor of peace, and then asked Micha Goldman (Labor) to replace him, because he felt unwell. He was treated with tranquilizers. Zissman and Tarif later made up.

Israel Petrochemical Enterprises Ltd.

RE: Notice to Shareholders of the Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Shareholders Meeting of the Company shall take place in the Company's offices, at Beit Elshai, 2 Ibn Gvriol Street, Tel Aviv, on Tuesday, April 8, 1997, at 9:00 a.m.

On the Agenda:

- 1) Consideration of the Company's Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 1996.
- 2) Final dividend for the year 1996.
- 3) Appointment of Auditors and determination of their fee.
- 4) Appointment/Election of the Directors and approval of Directors' list.

Under the Articles of Association of the Company, in the event that there is no quorum present at the meeting within one hour from the time fixed for that meeting, such meeting shall be adjourned for the next day, at the same time and place.

In the event that there is no quorum present at the adjourned meeting within one hour from the time fixed for that meeting, then the meeting shall take place with any number of participants attending such meeting, and such participants shall constitute a quorum.

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Panel slams Matza over health crisis

By JUDY SEGEL

The Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee yesterday called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to intervene personally and immediately in the Treasury's negotiations with the Health Ministry over severe overcrowding in the hospitals and the looming deficit in the health system.

The Israel Medical Association (IMA), which at 1 a.m. Wednesday announced a 24-hour warning strike would begin six hours later, criticized Health Minister Yehoshua Matza and his director-general Prof. Gabi Barabash for failing to appear at the meeting. Instead, said the IMA, they

sent only "second- and third-rank officials."

Matza explained later that he was busy in his office working specifically on the hospital crisis. He also said that the doctors' sanctions, in which they treated only emergency cases, were wrong even though their demands were justified. A ministry spokesman added: "The minister is leading the negotiations face to face with Treasury officials, with the support of the premier. Let him do this without pressure from strikes and threats."

The Knesset committee, chaired by Geshar MK Maxim Levy, voiced its support for the doctors' sanctions and called on Matza to "immediately take upon himself

responsibility for the struggle" for Treasury funds for the health system, "instead of disavowing responsibility for the collapse of the system."

Yisrael Ba'aliya MK Yuri Stern noted that the number of hospital beds per capita here is the lowest in the Western world. At the same time, average hospital stays are the shortest and residents pay high health taxes. Nurses Union head Ilana Cohen said that "once a new health minister learns the ropes, he is replaced."

Labor MK Yossi Katz said the Patents' Rights Law is being violated daily by the hospitals due to inadequate care and lack of privacy due to overcrowding.

Dr. Yitzhak Bertowitz, head of hospital-

ization services in the ministry, said the committee meeting was "superfluous" because intensive negotiations with the Treasury over allocations for extra beds and staff are going on. Dr. Ya'acov Hart, head of the Association of Hospital Directors, warned that by the end of this year, there would be a NIS 2 billion deficit in the health system. "The whole system will collapse by this summer," he declared.

The committee members decided to visit a number of hospitals to see the situation for themselves. The IMA last week instructed its members to practice "safe and responsible medicine" and to discharge patients only when they're well enough, especially in internal-medicine departments.

NEWS

in brief

Syrian held secretly for three years

A former Syrian soldier accused of espionage has been held in an Israeli prison - secretly and without trial - for the last three years, Channel 1 reported yesterday.

"Security officials, who are willing to deport him, have been unable to find a country willing to grant him asylum," it said, adding that IDF soldiers arrested Ali Fahmi, a sergeant in the Syrian artillery corps, three years ago after he crossed into Israeli-held territory near Mount Hermon.

The General Security Service accused him of entering Israel with the intent of spying, it said, adding that he told investigators he decided to desert from the Syrian army after a "violent argument" with his commanding officer.

Israel Radio said Fahmi's imprisonment had been kept classified until the Supreme Court lifted the secrecy order yesterday. Reuter

Seven-year-old raped in Petah Tikva

A seven-year-old girl, who had been left home alone, was raped in her Petah Tikva home yesterday afternoon. A man rang the doorbell and she allowed him inside, where he proceeded to steal jewelry and then raped the child. The incident was discovered several hours later when her parents returned home. Jtm

Tamra man charged with rape

GAZI Hajazi, 39, of Tamra, was indicted yesterday in Haifa District Court for the rape and attempted rape of two immigrant women living in an absorption center near Haifa. According to the charge sheet, the suspect, on the pretext of offering each of the women employment in his office, took them for rides in his car and attacked them. He is charged with raping one of the women in January and attempting to rape the second woman last month. The second victim managed to fight him off and call the police. Jtm

Youth coach remanded for indecent acts

The Jerusalem Magistrate's Court yesterday remanded for five days the coach of a local youth basketball team for allegedly committing indecent acts against his players. The coach, who denies all charges, was arrested yesterday after six youths complained to police last week. Judge Yehezkel Barkaly denied a police request for a 10-day remand. Jtm

Two killed in truck-car collision

Driver A. Shahamiya, 48, and passenger Noam Hales, 47, both of Jatt, were killed yesterday, when a truck driven by a 25-year-old man from Zemer swerved out of its lane and struck their car head-on. The truck driver and three car passengers were admitted to Hillel Yoffe Hospital in Hadera with light to moderate injuries. Jtm

Judge criticized in youths' child abuse case

Women's and children's organizations, as well as MKs, yesterday criticized Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court Judge Nira Lidski's explanation for the light sentence she gave to two 14-year-olds who committed indecent acts against a five-year-old girl. The teens' offense was just a bit of fondling, Lidski reportedly said at a WIZO event this week. When journalist Asheret Kutler, who was the discussion's moderator, then asked Lidski what she would do to the teens if the girl had been her daughter, she responded, "I would shoot them." Jtm

Bar-On Affair questioning continues

Lawyer Dov Weissglass, once considered a candidate for attorney-general, was summoned to give evidence by the police team investigating the Bar-On Affair. Weissglass was asked if he knew of any improprieties concerning the subsequent appointment of Romi Bar-On. While candidates for the position were being examined Weissglass met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and yesterday was reportedly asked by investigators of the nature of that meeting.

Today Shas MK Aryeh Deri is expected to be summoned for questioning by police to determine still if there is any truth to allegations that Deri promised the government Shas's support on the Hebron redeployment in return for Bar-On's appointment, as broadcast by Channel 1. Deri's advisor, Yehuda Avidan, may also be called to give evidence this morning to discover if he was privy to information concerning the alleged deal. Raine Marcus

Weizman: We must solve drug problem

By BATSNEVA TSUR

There are close to 250,000 drug abusers in the country and some 20,000 of them are addicted to hard drugs, the head of the War on Drugs Authority, Shlomo Gal, said yesterday.

"Israeli society is becoming so permissive that drug use is no longer scorned," Gal told a gathering of mayors who met with the president to discuss ways of fighting drug abuse.

President Ezer Weizman, who hosted the meeting at Beit Hanassi, told the mayors and local council heads that it is not enough to ask questions. "We have to come up with practical solutions," he said.

The president and his wife, Reuma, have met with many experts and former drug abusers and Reuma Weizman is to visit the US next month to raise funds to combat the scourge.

Some three and a half tons of heroin are smuggled into Israel every year and some 25 tons of hashish and marijuana, Gal said. "This is no longer the innocuous hashish of former years, because it has been 'enriched,'" he said.

In the streets of Or Yehuda, youths smoke bashish openly. "This is a national battle that we have to wage," the town's mayor, Shlomo Edri, said.

Shmuel Richman, head of the Negev local councils, said "hundreds of kilos" of drugs are smuggled in nightly across the border with Egypt.

In Tel Aviv, where NIS 12 million are devoted to combating drugs, there has been an improvement; but double that sum is needed, Mayor Ronni Milo told the gathering.

A solution was proposed by Prof. Avi Degani, who has researched the subject. "We have to market the campaign against drugs, just like the Americans did with smoking," he said. "They have succeeded in virtually stopping smoking. We have to turn drug usage into an anti-orm."



Breathe easy

Youngsters wearing gas masks participate in a civil defense exercise at Jerusalem's Steff School yesterday, part of nationwide exercises to test the schools' readiness. Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert and Education Minister Zevulun Hammer were on hand to observe the drill. (Byna McBurney)

MKs begin debate on cloning

Committee disagrees on how to outlaw human clones

By JUDY SEGEL

The Knesset Science & Technology Committee yesterday heard the deep moral and ethical concerns of doctors, scientists, ethicists and rabbis over the scientific breakthrough in Scotland that recently produced a cloned sheep. Nearly all the committee's MKs agreed cloning humans should be forbidden, but they disagreed on how to go about it in a way that would include "outlaw" states and would not put too many limitations on academic freedom. Hebrew University geneticist Prof. Adam Friedmann said he

thought it would be difficult or even impossible to clone humans in the foreseeable future, but Science Ministry director-general Zvi Yanna'i said the process used to produce the sheep would inevitably be improved and speeded up, making human cloning a definite possibility.

Tel Aviv University ethicist Prof. Assa Kasher minimized the fears that human cloning would de-personalize society or lead to armies cloned in a dictator's image. "This may shock you, but I don't see anything wrong with allowing parents to produce a clone of a child who died."

In any case, he said, even a genetic copy of a human being would have his own values, ideology and desires due to different environmental influences.

Labor MK Haggai Merom, who has proposed a bill to prohibit human cloning, said supervision of scientific experiments was needed, just as nuclear energy research and development are supervised.

Rabbi Yigal Shafran, head of the medical division in the Chief Rabbinate, said scientists must not be so arrogant that they think they are God. Legislation is needed to supervise their work in genetics,

but it should not tie their hands, as their research can also be used to cure diseases, he said.

The Knesset should wait until President Bill Clinton's National Bioethics Committee issues its recommendations on cloning before taking any stand, suggested Prof. Haim Aviv of the National Council for Research and Development. "We're not ripe for legislation in this field yet. It's too early," Aviv added that scientists were trained to be sensitive to the ethical and social implications of their work and were impelled by the desire to advance the fight against disease.

Court refuses to nullify bought evidence

By RAINE MARCUS

Tel Aviv District Court Judge Sara Sirotta rejected a petition yesterday to nullify testimony bought from a private investigator in the media-wiretapping case.

Private investigator Ze'ev Laufer, who is charged with 18 counts of wiretapping in the affair, was paid \$600,000 by Ma'ariv publisher Ofer Nimrod to give police evidence implicating *Yedioth Aharonot* publisher Arnon Mozes and the daily's security officer, Haim Rozenberg, for commissioning wiretapping. The money was paid from Ma'ariv and Nimrod's Hachsharot Hayishuv capital.

Security company owner and Ma'ariv shareholder David Spector, who is a security advisor to Ha'aretz, petitioned the Tel Aviv District Court as to the legality of the deal with Laufer.

Sirotta ruled that although she initially felt disgust at the agreement between Ma'ariv and Laufer, after

close inspection, she could not find anything illegal in it, especially since police had previously negotiated with Laufer to explore the possibility of his turning state's witness against *Yedioth*.

The transaction was conducted with the state attorney's full authorization and was made to expose the truth, Sirotta ruled.

Therefore, she continued, the question of "buying witnesses" by a private party was not applicable. Furthermore, the public interest was greater than Ma'ariv's interest to expose its rivals, she said. Although the agreement with Laufer may not be moral and is problematic, it does not constitute a precedent for "new norms in the country," Sirotta said.

She also accused Spector of not having "clean hands" who he petitioned the court, since he is a friend of Rozenberg's and filed the petition just after the latter unsuccessfully appealed to the High Court of Justice against his impending indictment.

CABINET

Continued from Page 1

"The Middle East can be like the Benelux countries including Israel, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon," Arafat told them.

Leshin said that relations were established with the Gaza Chamber of Commerce. "They wanted to open an office in Tel Aviv and we offered them room in the Israel Chamber of Commerce."

What bothers the merchants most is the continuing closure. Despite some easing of the restrictions, most businessmen still cannot travel out of Gaza. "Flowers meant for export are fed to the goats," Leshin heard.

PA negotiator Saeb Erekat said the crisis blew up because, in Sunday's meeting with Levy, the Israelis refused even to hear the Palestinian arguments in defense of their interpretation of the Oslo 2 agreements. "We urged them to

send an Israeli legal team to meet a Palestinian legal team to work out the provisions relating to permanent status and further redeployment. They refused."

Meanwhile the UN General Assembly, void of supporters of Israel, debated the crisis yesterday. (Story, Page 2)

Levy told the Knesset plenum yesterday the PA is allowing groups like Hamas, which until recently it considered to be dangerous opponents, to join PA meetings. Answering several motions to the agenda on the planned first further redeployment, Levy said there are signs the PA is beginning to foment unrest, which could be particularly damaging since Hamas is involved. He described the situation as "a dangerous development."

Levy said the government's decision to build on Har Homa is still valid and stressed that neither this nor the previous government had promised to refrain from building in Jerusalem. Levy also said the government is

determined to build housing for the Arab sector as well.

He warned that violence or international pressure could stall the peace process. "We won't abandon our interests because of pressure," he said.

Levy strongly condemned Arafat's planned meeting in Gaza, saying it violates the promise Arafat made to Rabin to solve all problems directly and without international intervention.

Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Chairman Uzi Landau (Likud) attacked the prime minister, saying the continued negotiations with the Palestinians violate the government's basic guidelines, which demand reciprocity as a condition for discussions on the permanent arrangements.

Meretz leader Yossi Sarid promised that, should Netanyahu suspend the decision on the Har Homa project, Meretz would withdraw its no-confidence motion and give him parliamentary support on the issue.



A final dance

Former 'Jerusalem Post' dance critic Dora Sowden with dancers from the modern ballet workshop of the Rubin Academy High School following the presentation of a JNF certificate for 18 trees planted in her honor. The Jerusalem Municipality and the 'Post' yesterday honored the internationally recognized critic for her unique contribution to local dance life. Sowden recently retired after more than 50 years of writing about dance, 30 of them for the 'Post'. (Tara Helen Kaye, Photo: Brian Hender)

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 Tour guide: Yisrael Shalem

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No injuries in Japan N-plant fire

By BRAVEN SMILLIE

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese watching the evening news yesterday saw dramatic film footage of an accident at a nuclear plant that made it seem like a scene right out of Star Trek.

The fires at the nuclear processing plant in northeastern Japan exposed 35 workers to minimal amounts of radiation, a plant spokesman said yesterday.

No one was injured in the fires, which broke out in the same area 10 hours apart, and officials said radioactivity levels remained well within safe limits around the plant.

Dressed in what looked like bloated space suits and helmets, and breathing loudly through respirators, investigators walked past laboratory equipment wrenched

apart by an explosion and two fires.

Dozens of alarm bells were still ringing and banks of red lights were flashing as the men tentatively poked through scraps of twisted metal in a building that houses nuclear waste handling facilities.

"Let's keep out of there," said one as they looked into a second-floor room in which drums full of radioactive material mixed protectively with asphalt are stored. They peered inside to see the floor and ceiling coverings torn apart, and equipment strewn around.

On the first floor, near the asphalt-handling room where the fires broke out, water was splattering down from near the ceiling. The room in which the fire broke out was not shown on the video.

The accident — which exposed more workers to radioactivity than

any other in the history of Japan — immediately increased the criticism faced by the nation's nuclear power system.

The blazes and explosion occurred on the first floor of a four-story building in Tokaimura, a million-square-meter complex with a nuclear fuel reprocessing plant and laboratories, 115 km northeast of Tokyo. The compound contains no nuclear reactor.

Damage from the blast was clear in the video. It was edited in several places, and there was no definite indication of where the blast was centered.

Japan already was trying to rebuild trust in its nuclear program, set back by an accident in December 1995 in a prototype fast-breeder reactor, which produces additional plutonium for fuel while generating electricity.



An Albanian rebel peers into a car carrying reporters at a roadblock in Delvine yesterday. Delvine is under rebel control. (Reuters)

Albanian PM wants talks with rebels

TIRANA (Reuters) — Albania's new prime minister, Bashkim Fino, facing a growing wave of unrest, said yesterday he wanted talks with armed rebels holding towns throughout southern Albania.

As rebellion moved closer to the capital, Fino met political parties to discuss forming an interim government to oversee new elections.

His comments followed appeals from Italy and Greece to meet the rebels and an announcement that a European mediation mission led by former Austrian leader Franz Vranitzky was to return to Tirana today.

"I think this is not a time to issue orders on either side. It is a time for talks and dialogue," Fino told state television.

"Not only my personal (links) but those of my government should be based on good understanding and cooperation with them so that they listen to our options and we listen to theirs." In some parts of the south the rebellion appeared to have deteriorated into lawlessness, with armed gangs roaming at will through rebel-held towns.

Pilot reopens TWA missile theory

NEW YORK (AP) — A military helicopter pilot who witnessed the explosion of TWA Flight 800 repeatedly told investigators he thought a missile struck the plane, according to a source.

The Air National Guard pilot has not been allowed to speak publicly because of an FBI ban on federal employees speaking about the investigation. The pilot, Capt. Chris Baur, is a civilian pilot for US Customs.

Baur's eyewitness report comes to light as critics of the investigation claim to have evidence suggesting that Flight 800 was shot down by an errant US Navy missile. A Pentagon spokesman said investigators had thoroughly probed the issue, even inventorying the Navy's missile arsenal.

"Personnel have been interviewed, records have been checked. There is absolutely no evidence to support

this theory," said Kenneth Bacon. "There was not evidence two months ago, there is not evidence now."

A number of eyewitness accounts said people saw something in the sky the night of the crash. Baur's clear view from the helicopter and his military training would make his account one of the most credible.

Mechanical failure or a bomb also haven't been ruled out as possible causes of the crash.

Russia's reformers return, anger opponents

MOSCOW (Reuters) — Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said yesterday he was forming a new government of liberal reformers in a reshuffle the Communist opposition branded "ruinous" for Russia and vowed to fight.

President Boris Yeltsin, firmly back at the helm after many months of illness, has given the premier one week to reorganize his cabinet. Only Chernomyrdin and new First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais are assured of keeping their jobs.

"Professional market economists, firm supporters of the president's course of reforms, will come into the government," Itar-Tass news agency quoted Chernomyrdin as saying.

The prospect of more free market moves under Chubais, once Russia's privatization supremo, was enough to drive Moscow's communist-dominated parliament to vote for a furious, though unbinding, motion condemning the reshuffle.

As yet, however, Chernomyrdin has named no names but said new ministers will be under 50 with administrative experience.

"Now there are all possibilities of forming a united and effective team of serious and responsible professionals," Chernomyrdin said, adding personnel changes could be announced sooner than the seven-day deadline set by Yeltsin.

The State Duma lower house of parliament, dominated by

Yeltsin's communist and nationalist opponents, approved by 230 votes to 122 a toughly worded resolution condemning the moves.

"The changes carried out in the government again illustrate the desire of the current authorities to continue the ruinous social-economic course which has brought Russia to the brink of catastrophe," said the resolution. It carries no legal force.

"They are an eloquent testimony to the readiness of the leadership to subject Russia and her vital interests to the dictat of the International Monetary Fund and foreign capital," said the resolution, drafted by the Communist faction.

Opposition deputies have been particularly enraged by Yeltsin's decision to draft Chubais, a 41-year-old liberal, back into the government to oversee economic reforms. The resolution called his appointment a "direct challenge to social opinion."

The Duma has limited powers under a 1993 constitution, drawn up after Yeltsin subdued its Soviet-era predecessor with tanks.

Since Chernomyrdin stays put in the reshuffle, the Duma will have no right of review over the new cabinet appointments.

But more seriously, the communists have threatened a general no-confidence motion which, if voted through twice, would force Yeltsin to either dismiss the government or dissolve the Duma.

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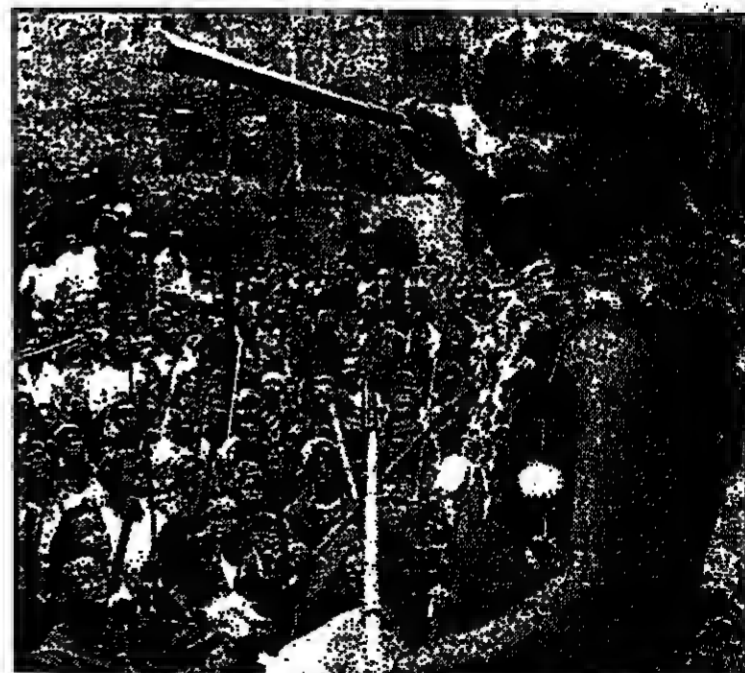
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Zulu demonstrators gather yesterday in Johannesburg. (Reuters)

Three killed as Zulus march

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) — Three people were killed and at least four wounded yesterday as Zulu nationalists marched to commemorate the slaying of more than 50 people in a 1994 protest ahead of South Africa's first all-race election.

Police said the first two killings occurred in Soweto black township before the rally, while the third was reported soon after the protesters had arrived in Johannesburg's city center.

Reports that violent clashes had erupted between police and

demonstrators afterwards were denied by police on the scene. "We confirm three deaths. Two people were killed in Soweto township and one at the station in town," said police Sergeant Mark Reynolds.

The march was held to commemorate the deaths of at least 55 people as well as the hundreds injured in and around Johannesburg during the 1994 demonstration when supporters of the mainly Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party clashed in support of Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini.

مركز من التجديد

World's premiere cheapskate has had enough

Amy Dacyczyn, editor of the Tightwad Gazette... "cheapest person alive," says she has done all she can to push thrift as an alternative lifestyle.

Are Americans still frugal? She says there's no way to measure, unless it's by analyzing the use of cloth diapers or canning jars.

BEING CHEAP has paid off for her. Dacyczyn is retiring as a million-dollar mom. Her impressive net worth comes not so much from shopping at yard

room, Victorian home is paid for. Jim Dacyczyn, 47, draws a \$14,000 annual military pension... she's retired after 21 years of service.

ALTHOUGH SHE has signed off from preaching tightwadness monthly to her subscribers, she's not retiring from baking bread from scratch... with dough not kneaded in a bread machine...



MEIR RONINEN © 97

and profligate spending habits. SHE BEGAN her newsletter dubbing herself FZ (the Frugal Zealot) in June 1990 with an investment of a few thousand dollars.

does is expensive in terms of money and time. Martha Stewart expands a lot of energy on single events, like wood-graining wrapping paper.

from good leftover soup at home. This is about 10 cents worth of soup. She plans an annual family-oriented newsletter for readers who want to keep up with her world.

sales or cutting her family's hair at home but from savvy peddling of her gospel of thrift in newsletter and book form to an overspending public grasping for help.

FLAIR Putting your best foot forward. Footwear sales will undoubtedly soar this summer, because at long last we have something radically different, if not exactly new to those of us who were around during the flower-child and punk eras.

CAVEAT EMPROI!

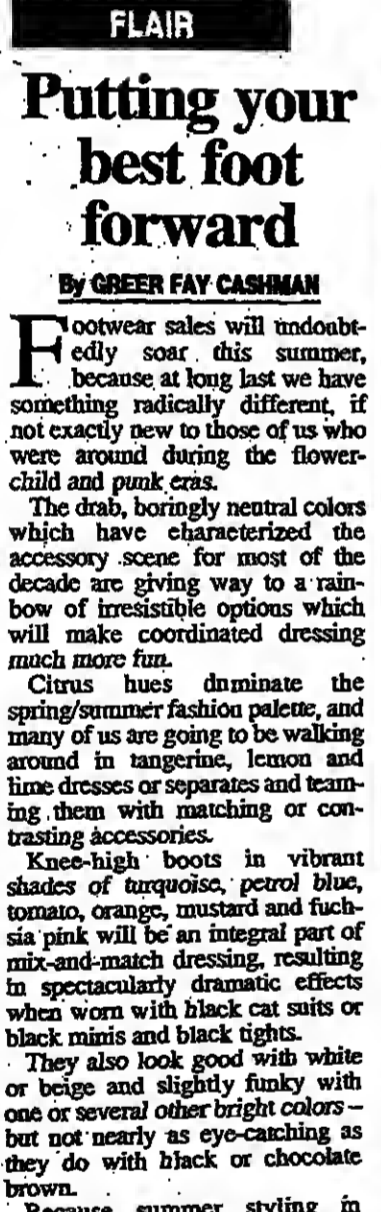
NII requirements for hired help protect both employer, worker

An acquaintance recently called to ask about National Insurance (NI) payments for a new cleaning woman she'd hired, who did not want to provide them with an ID number.

Each replacement, or additional worker, must be reported and registered as described earlier. And here is where we get to the question I was originally asked to settle: whether it is possible to pay the insurance for an employee without providing the NII with a specific name and ID number.

Technically, the answer is a flat "no." The purpose of paying this insurance is not only to protect an employer from having to dle nt nts of money in the event that he's sued, but to protect the rights of the employee, by ensuring that he receive the full extent of benefits guaranteed him by law.

deductibles based on the (false) claim that their wives are unemployed. This is also true of people collecting unemployment insurance. As a result, the NII will accept payment from an employer, as long as he can provide at least the name of the household employee in question.



This summer's trend: Knee-high boots, these by Lafayette. (back photo)

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Sharing the burden

King Hussein's pained and painful letter to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu must be taken seriously. There can be no questioning the king's sincere desire for the success of the peace process, and even his desire to deepen the warm peace with Israel. The king himself, however, also bears responsibility not to return to the rejectionist stance he held during the Gulf war, and not to ape Egypt's spoiler role.

Hussein makes numerous charges, large and small, concerning "accumulating tragic actions" that are "fast sliding [Arabs and Israelis] towards an abyss of bloodshed and disaster." The king continues, "Your course of actions seem bent on destroying all I believe in or have striven to achieve with the Hashemite family since Faisal the First and Abdullah to the present times." Harsh words. In a letter of response, Netanyahu not only denies that he is destroying the peace process, but claims that it is he who has saved it from oblivion. "I inherited a process that was failing," writes the prime minister. "The country was suffering its worst terrorist wave in its history, with bus bombs going off in the heart of Israeli cities and a devastating mini-war taking a heavy toll in Lebanon. By election time, the peace process was in its death throes."

Netanyahu's letter continues, "Rather than let the Oslo process die after the elections, I sought to revive it. I have taken decisions that even my predecessors were extremely reluctant to attempt."

It is certainly ironic to hear Netanyahu proudly claim credit for saving an agreement that he continues to attack. Even if one discounts the claim of saving Oslo from non-believers such as Shimon Peres, it is true that Oslo under Netanyahu has received a substantial shot in the arm. Under Netanyahu, the withdrawal from most of Hebron, and indirectly, the Oslo Accord itself received an unprecedented 87-vote majority in the Knesset.

Before Hebron, the charge that Netanyahu was destroying the peace process, though unfair, was in the realm of credibility — he had not shown whether he would abide by Oslo or seek to extract Israel from the agreement. Now that Netanyahu has gone to considerable lengths to fulfill Oslo, he is being accused, in effect, of not doing so with enough enthusiasm and generosity.

In this context, it is hardly fair for Hussein to saddle Netanyahu with the charge of potentially "bury[ing] the peace process for all times." Is there no room to credit Netanyahu with sharing the king's fundamental desire for, as Hussein poetically describes it, "the final reconciliation of all the descendants of the children of Abraham?" The king's letter refrains not only from giving Netanyahu any credit, but from

placing any burden of restraint and responsibility on the Palestinians.

With respect to Israel's decision to build a Jewish neighborhood on Har Homa in Jerusalem, Hussein accuses Netanyahu of "maneuver[ing] our Palestinian brethren into inevitable violent resistance." In fact, violence is only inevitable if key leaders such as King Hussein do not reject violence as a legitimate component of the peace process. If the king sees the threat of Palestinian violence as such a dire threat to the peace process, why does he not call for Palestinian restraint? As a leader who has taken his share of courageous risks for peace, Hussein has the right to request that Netanyahu resist pressures against him that are contrary to a broader view of Israel's interests. By the same token, Hussein should not simply adopt every Palestinian demand as his own, and refuse to stand up to Palestinian threats of violence that, by his own lights, severely threaten the peace process.

It would be very worrisome if Hussein's letter to Netanyahu reflected a return to the period of the Gulf war, when he took the side of Iraq against the US-led coalition that saved Kuwait. At that time, we were expected to understand the domestic pressures he was under, yet Hussein dismisses the pressures on Netanyahu to build in Jerusalem. It is one thing to ask Netanyahu not to build new settlements in remote corners of Judea and Samaria; quite another to suggest that Israel not act as sovereign in its own capital.

When asked Tuesday about his letter to Netanyahu, while Israeli papers were full of incorrect and scathing leaks from the supposed text, Hussein pointed his finger at the camera and asked the public to remember that he feels a "duty to the Israeli public as well." This is a truly admirable sentiment, and one that no other current Arab leader would express.

It is also encouraging that Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai was greeted warmly this week in Jordan, and that relations between the two militaries seem unaffected by the current ebb in relations at the top. At the end of the day, however, it is not possible for Jordan to maintain a close relationship with Israel and Israelis while unfairly demonizing Israel's prime minister.

It is appropriate for Netanyahu to work harder in treating Hussein as a partner and a friend in the peace process. There are gestures Netanyahu could have made recently to Hussein, such as allowing him to fly Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat from Amman to Gaza. But the king cannot expect all his advice to be taken, and should not place the peace process's entire burden of compromising, taking risks, and resisting public pressure on Israel's doorstep.



Smile for the cameras!

URI DAN DENNIS EISENBERG
Binyamin Netanyahu is a victim of the travel bug. He likes nothing better than to lay aside coalition woes and the Bar-On scandal, and forget sinking popularity polls and his mother's criticism by taking off for Washington, Amman, and Moscow.

No sooner was he back from the US than he accepted a surprise invitation from Cairo to a party on the Nile. There, as in other capitals, he smiled happily at his host, President Mubarak.

Why was the prime minister in such a hurry to grab his toothbrush and rush off to Egypt last week? Did he or his aides have even fleeting second thoughts about accepting Mubarak's hospitality?

For months our government has been assailing Mubarak for his vicious verbal bombardment of Netanyahu and Israel. And with good reason.

Egypt obstructed the Hebron withdrawal negotiations, egging Yasser Arafat on to take a more and more extremist line — so much so that Washington was finally forced to tell Mubarak: "Cool it, or else."

To complaints by the House Committee about strident anti-Semitism in the Egyptian media, Mubarak's foreign minister replied disingenuously in the US: "All Arabs are Semites. How can we be antisemites?"

At the same time, a skillful public relations exercise was under way back in Cairo, with the kind cooperation of Binyamin Netanyahu.

Clearly, the front-page press photos and TV focus on the Egyptian and Israeli leaders shaking hands and looking frankly into each other's eyes was aimed at deflecting any criticism that might be aimed at Egypt during Mubarak's US visit.

How could Netanyahu walk into this trap? Didn't he see that an exaggerated display of friendship with Mubarak would discourage the Anti-Defamation League in New York and others, Jews and non-Jews, in their protest against the vicious Egyptian anti-Semitic onslaught? Little wonder a New York columnist recently described Israelis as "the dumbest Jews in the world."

An Israeli Foreign Ministry official shook his head in disbelief over Netanyahu's haste in going off to Cairo. He asked a writer of this column: "What was the purpose of the trip — other than to help Mubarak ward off justifiable criticism in the US?"

Isn't it clear that Egypt has been playing the same game for 19 years? It's all politeness and smiles in Cairo — then the moment your back is turned, they damn you with their curses."

Truly none are so blind as those who will not see.

HOURS before Netanyahu's arrival, *Al-Wafiq* ran a cartoon of

URI DAN DENNIS EISENBERG

Netanyahu with his name misspelt to read "he stinks" in Arabic. And an *Al-Akhar* cartoon showed a car with Netanyahu's name on the number plate facing a large traffic sign declaring: "Entry forbidden to Cairo."

To add insult to injury, during the two hours the two leaders sat together with only their translators present, Mubarak behaved like an arrogant interrogator, cross-examining Netanyahu by means of a prepared questionnaire he held in his hand.

Netanyahu acquitted himself well, we were told, spinning his vision of peace in the Middle East. "Our president looks bewildered by Netanyahu's oratory," commented an English-speaking Egyptian journalist at the press conference that followed. "So are Israelis," quipped a nearby voice, in Hebrew.

Hosni Mubarak doesn't need a public relations firm to polish his image. He's got Israel's premier

More disturbing was the next remark from the Egyptian: "We already knew all about you being forced to pull out of 10 percent of the West Bank. The Americans told us."

Suddenly it was all crystal-clear. The whole first-stage West Bank withdrawal was American-crafted and choreographed. And Netanyahu's visit to Cairo was also planned by the US, to ensure that the State Department could then roll out the red carpet for Mubarak.

Criticism of Mubarak's reception would thus be muted, by pictures of all that "coziness" with the Israeli leader in the shadow of

the pyramids. The press conference in Egypt revealed the true depth of Egyptian antagonism to Israel. Asked an Egyptian woman journalist: "Are you about to bomb somebody in the region, like Begin did when he illegally attacked the Iraqi nuclear plant?" And another voice: "Why do you treat Palestinians like the Americans treat blacks in their south?" Further hostile questions to Netanyahu followed.

Finally, an angry Shimon Shiffer from *Yediot Aharanot* got up and asked: "Why all these hostile questions to our prime minister? Why the ceaseless attacks against Israel in the Egyptian press?"

Laconically, Mubarak responded: "We have a free press here. And what about *The Jerusalem Post*, which is attacking both me and Egypt all the time?"

Mubarak's comment was broadcast by international TV as a statement of fact. No one pointed out the obvious: that there is no such thing as a free press in Egypt. Nothing can appear without government approval or dictat.

The last salvo was fired at the luxurious Dahara Palace. To end the day, Netanyahu had the dubious pleasure of being introduced to a group of Egyptian so-called intellectuals.

The questions aimed at him came from the gutter. Why do you have a racist, Hitler-like policy toward the Palestinians and Arabs in the Middle East? Why do you treat Arabs like blacks are treated in the US's southern states?

And from a retired general: "I can see, Mr. Netanyahu, that you have learned nothing from all the wars I fought against Israel." Netanyahu responded sharply, great as usual in debate.

Perhaps the Egyptians should have told the departing Israeli leader to "have a nice day." After all, Netanyahu had given Mubarak a priceless PR gift, which the Egyptian would use well in the US.

The writers are authors of The Mossad: Secrets of the Israeli Secret Service and other books on the Middle East.

POSTSCRIPTS

ONE OF THE world's tiniest countries may become even tinier. Nevis — a Caribbean isle known for beaches favored by young British royals — wants to secede from a federation with the slightly larger island of St. Kitts.

St. Kitts-Nevis is already listed as the world's least populous country, with only 41,800 residents. Nevis alone has just 9,000.

Ever since the country became independent from Britain in 1983, Nevisians have grumbled about alleged domination by St. Kittians.

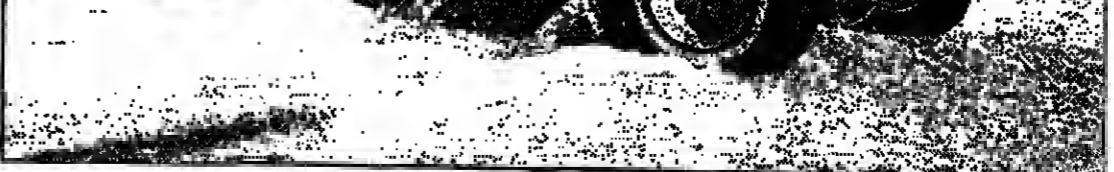
Premier Vance Amory

announced the secession bid, and Federal Prime Minister Denzil Douglas said he didn't object.

"If secession is the choice of Nevis, then so be it, and my government will not stand in the way," Douglas said.

But the islands' neighbors aren't pleased. "The fragmentation of the Caribbean people, already marginalized in the international community, weakens every Caribbean country and the entire region," said Prime Minister Lester Bird of neighboring Antigua and Barbuda.

PICTURE POSTSCRIPT



"Don't worry, guys; the ice is plenty thick." Well, it wasn't, and this minivan crashed through, forcing six Canadian ice-fishermen to scramble out the back door. (AP)

'Maiden' names

JEREMY MAISSEL

You don't have to be a Sherlock Holmes to work out the etymology of a name like Abrahamson. And you don't need to be a cryptanalyst to decode names like Shmulewitsch, Davidson or Yitzhakshvili. Such names, where the suffix indicates the geographical origin of the family, are widespread amongst Jews everywhere.

Ibn-Haim (the Arab communities), Ahramov (Russia), Yitzhak-Pur (Persia), and Ahramovski (Slavic countries) — to mention but a few — are Jewish patronyms honoring family heroes. All incorporating "son of," they are a natural way for revered names to be passed down the generations and the ages.

What about women's names? Recent press reports regarding complaints received by the Interior Women's Network said the Interior Ministry was ignoring a February 1996 amendment to the Names Law legislating that a woman's name is no longer to be automatically changed to her husband's name on marriage.

"The law thus recognizes that a person's family name is part of an individual's identity, and is not to be changed unless the individual so requests."
The ministry, it seems, is still automatically "updating" women's names. In reply to charges of foot-dragging, it cites technical reasons for the delay in implementing the new direc-

What do Isaac Bashevis Singer, Itzhak Perلمان and Malcolm Rifkind have in common?

ives. New computerization next month will enable the legislation to be effected.

The practice in which a woman retains her maiden name on marrying is a statement, certainly. But it is a hollow one, at best. First, although it is called a "maiden name," all it does is preserve the name of the "maiden's" father.

Secondly, with social attitudes to women becoming more favorable with time, it is fairly likely that a "maiden's" father will be less of a feminist than the husband whose name she declines to assume.

Thirdly, the statement's impact is transient. It may say something about the new wife — hot her daughter will take her father's name, and thus the whole story will start again.

IN an over-zealous feminism, many Jewish women about to wed haven't hothored to look closely at the family names they are rejecting — many of which immortalize the memory of Jewish family heroes.

Take for example, Freud, as in Sigmund. (He, I'm sure, would have had something interesting to say about daughters who cling to their father's names). His family name is a derivative of the woman's name Frejda.

And what do Nobel laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer, violinist Itzhak Perلمان and British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind have in common? Their matronymic surnames.

Bashevis comes from the name Bat-Sheva (Bas-Sheva in the Ashkenazi pronunciation). Rifkind comes from Rivka. Perلمان means "husband of Pe'ajiri. Similarly, Estherman is the husband of Esther, Dinerman of *Dina*, Hodessman or Godesman of Hadassah, and Zeldman of Zeld. Baskin carries the suffix "kin" signifying "child of." Other examples are Sorokin from Sarah, Rivkin from Rivka, Chaikin from Chaya and Dvorkin from Dvora.

There is also Rochlin from Rachel, Yantzin from Yenta, Feigin from Feiga, and Blumen from Bluma. Havlin comes from Hava, and Tzeitlin from Tzeitl. A different suffix yields names such as Malkov from Malka, Perlov from Peri, and Chamov from Charna.

The list of Jewish patronyms is vast, but far less known than Jewish surnames.

Women's fight to keep their maiden names thus seems a spurious one. There are many other genuine issues of real inequality to which they would be doing far better to direct their energies.

Some feminists say that 90 percent of men give the other 10 percent a bad name. Perhaps they don't realize that quite a few Jewish women are passing on good Jewish women's names to their wives and children, and to future generations.

The writer, a religious educator, is a member of Kibbutz Alumin.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POLISH RESTITUTION

Sir, — Readers of J. Bushinsky's article "Insult and injury" (March 5) on restitution of Jewish communal property in Poland may get the impression that Poland does not intend to proceed with restitution in an open and honest way, which is a serious misunderstanding. Had the author double-checked information on the subject he would have probably restrained himself from rather irresponsible comments which are both unjust and miss the point.

It is not true that "the legislation would compensate only a minuscule remnant of Polish Jewry...in only nine Polish cities." Firstly, it is not a law dealing with compensation but with restitution of property of religious communities only. Secondly, the law enables proper organizations and institutions to set up a foundation which will be legally authorized to take care of the property. Both WJRO and the World Federation of Polish Jews may become partners in the foundation provided it is deemed appropriate.

It is also untrue that the legislation takes into account only nine cities in Poland where contemporary Jewish religious communities have been established. Activities of the foundation will cover the whole territory of Poland, with the hope that it will support active people willing to contribute to the communities of Bialystok, Lublin etc., which the author mentions as "no man's land," in regards to the process of restitution.

However, implementation of the law depends on both sides. On understanding the essence of friendly Polish-Jewish relations, of using the language of cooperation and dialogue which has been the aim of the Polish legislators but regrettably not of the author of the article.

ZBIGNIEW SZUMILEWICZ
Press Counselor
Embassy of Poland in Israel
Tel Aviv.

POTENCY OF SYMBOLS

Sir, — One should never underestimate the potency of symbols. Yasser Arafat understands this perfectly. Whenever he appears in public, his keffiyeh is carefully draped into a shape representing the whole of western Palestine. The significance of this may be lost on some, but it is fully comprehended by his followers.

A related symbol is the charter of the PLO, most of which is devoted to the desire to eliminate Israel. The fact remains that this symbol, central to the raison d'etre of the PLO, still exists intact. Any successor to Arafat could claim, with justification, that its aim has still to be accomplished.

Until we have the "reciprocity" of the cleansing in the charter of all references to the destruction of Israel, further negotiations with the Palestinians should be postponed.

OSCAR DAVIES
Jerusalem.

EASY CONVERSIONS

Sir, — The inference in the editorial "Strength in numbers" (February 28) that easier conversion, particularly for immigrants from the former Soviet Union and the Ethiopian Falash Mura, would significantly affect the Jewish people's demographic decline relative to the burgeoning general world population is a numerical fantasy. There are people who would convert if the process was standardized and easier, but their numbers would not begin to approach the billions of Christians, Moslems, Hindus and Buddhists.

The enormous Jewish impact on history and culture has resulted not from quantitative factors, but from qualitative factors. For example, Judaism's central role in the emergence of Christianity and Islam and the relationship of a tiny Jewish minority to these two massive surrounding societies.

ROBERT KIRK
Upper Nazareth.

LEBANON

Sir, — How many casualties in the security zone will it take before we learn what France and the United States so painfully learned? The battle against a guerrilla or terrorist force which has the support of the local population is a hopeless effort.

But Lebanon need not become for us Lebanon, as in Vietnam. The local populace can be made to learn that it is more painful for them to harbor and assist the enemy than it is to resist their presence. That can be accomplished without our soldiers being on the ground there if each enemy excursion across our border is met with a massive destruction by artillery of the area from which they attack plus damage to the utilities serving the public, such as power stations and water supply.

Soon enough the message will get through to the civilians and to the government that it is in their interest to stop the terror.

GERALD SCHROEDER
Jerusalem.

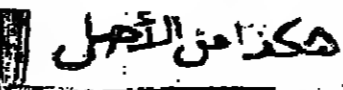
INEPT AND NAIVE

Sir, — Whatever the outcome of the Bar-On affair, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has shown himself not to be the one to lead the country.

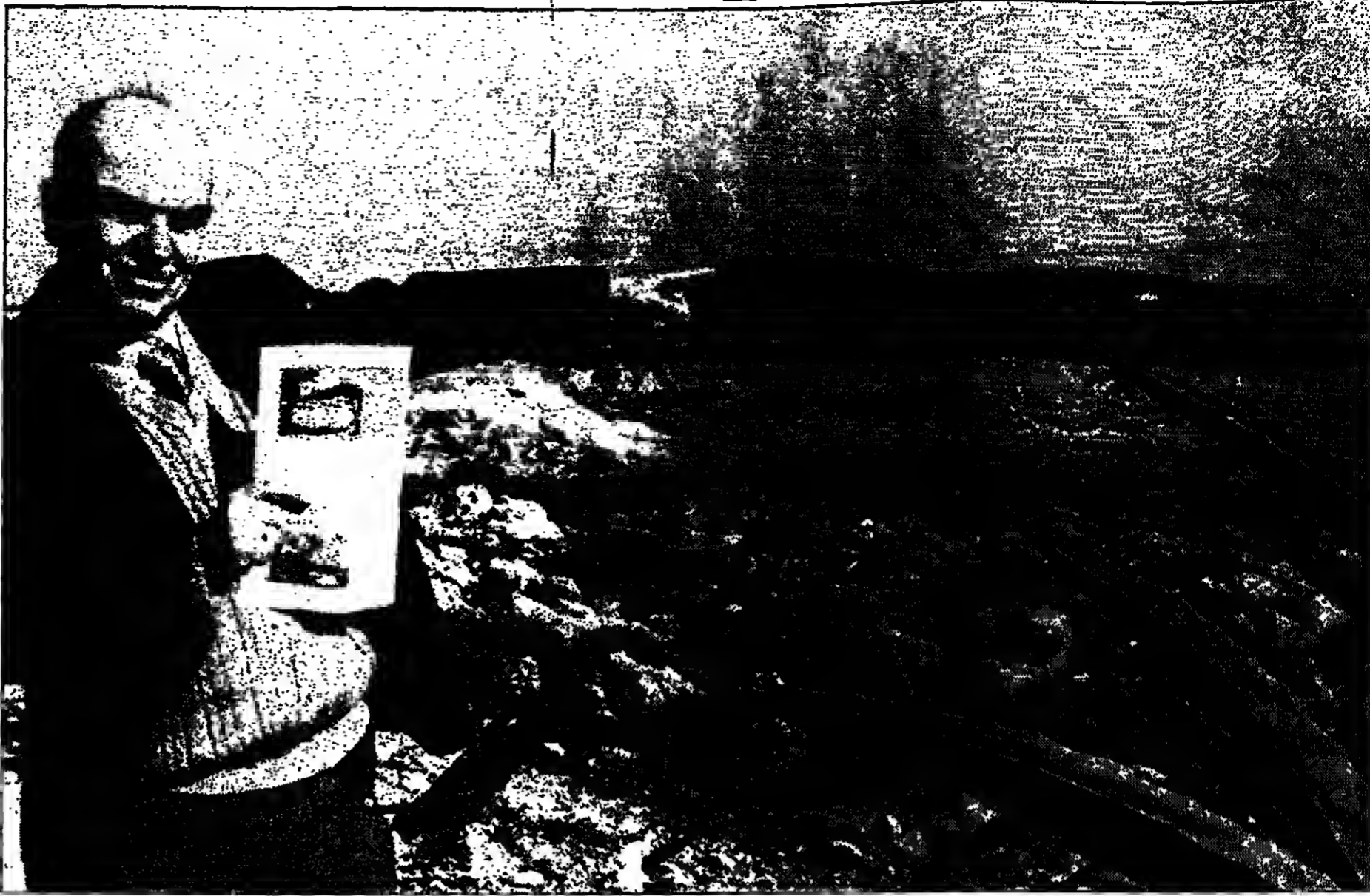
Even if we assume that he is innocent of any deliberate wrongdoing in the issue, we are left with one or both of the following conclusions:
He is extremely superficial, slipshod and dilettante. Witness his haste to rush Bar-On's appointment through his government, whereas the vital appointment of our UN ambassador is still pending.

He is totally inept and shockingly naive to have been forced by others to push for the Bar-On appointment under the circumstances.

L.M. SHORR
Jerusalem.



Rival claims to a disputed hilltop



David Myr points to the plot of land at Har Homa, where he planned to build a 6,500-unit apartment complex and golf course.

(Bryan McBarney)

Two-thirds of the land expropriated at Har Homa belonged to Jews. One of them won't give up the fight for his property. Palestinians aren't quite sure what to make of David Myr and his plans, Amy Klein reports

The uproar over Har Homa could have been avoided if the government hadn't expropriated private lands for the project, says David Myr, the only Jew still fighting against the land expropriation.

Out of the 1,850 dunams (460 acres) expropriated by the government for Har Homa, 1,400 belonged to Jews — all of whom, except for Myr, have accepted the terms of the expropriation. Myr owned the largest parcel of land expropriated for the project. For the last six years, Myr, heading a public real estate company called Makor, has been fighting the expropriation of his land through the court system all the way up to the Supreme Court.

Makor, with Myr at the helm, purchased 568 dunams of land in 1970; he also acquired the option to buy 383 dunams of land from Himanuta, a subsidiary of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) never exercised this option but still claims that it is valid, even though the JNF property may be sold by the government. For the last 25 years, Myr has been planning the new neighborhood on his parcel of almost 1,000 dunams of land: there are extensive architectural plans, from basic blueprints to floor models, and even an animated computer design of the entire project.

"The Peace Project," as Myr calls it, is an entire town that includes 6,500 apartments, hotels, parks, schools, an industrial section for high-tech factories, a country club and a golf course. If it were not for the government intervention, all this would have been built by Myr, backed by private investors who also had business arrangements with companies such as Africa Israel and Migdal Insurance.

On April 21, 1991, the government expropriated 1850 dunams of land — including Myr's piece and 450 dunams of Arab land — for its version of a Har Homa neighborhood. Their Har Homa, which will also include 6,500 housing units, has set off an international debate and threatens to send the peace process into disarray.

"Har Homa didn't have to be a political problem," says Myr. "It's a private matter: In Har Homa there are Arabs and Jews. There wouldn't be a problem if all the private owners could build for themselves. They can build on their land and I will build on mine."

Hanna Atrach, the mayor of Beit Sahur, the Arab town bordering Har Homa, agrees. Atrach is one of the 65 Arabs whose property was also expropriated by the government for the Har Homa project (Atrach's 110 dunams had been in his family since 1860).

Obviously Atrach prefers that the land returns to its original Arab and Jewish owners. But, he adds, "If Myr wants, he can develop it, but we in Beit Sahur should know about his plans." Atrach raises a consideration that Myr ignores: Even if the land is developed by private investors, it would only be viable if "the chance to build is on an equal basis. If he could develop his land then we should be able to develop ours."

"If the Palestinians would be given a fair shake to build on the land, then perhaps it would be less problematic," says Daniel Seidman, the lawyer representing 29 Arab families in the Supreme Court case against the expropriation.

tion (in a case separate from Myr's).

However, Palestinians are skeptical about government promises to provide housing for them. "The purported building for the Arabs is misinformation in order to quell the uproar," said Seidman. "In May 1995, during previous expropriations, the government said it would expedite the granting of building permits in eastern Jerusalem. Not one additional building permit was given."

The law of confiscation

The government of Israel can expropriate land according to the "Land Laws (Needs of the Public), 1943. Owners of confiscated land are compensated according to the market value of their property. Many, however, do not recognize the validity of the expropriation and refuse to accept remuneration. The law states that if the finance minister orders property for public use, he can purchase it according to procedures outlined in the law. "Public need" is reflexively defined as "any need that the finance minister approves as a public need."

Rasan Aodoni, of the Palestinian Center for Rapprochement, is a spokesman for all the Arab families with claims on Har Homa. He says that it is irrelevant whether the government or private owners

develop Har Homa. "Building Har Homa will destroy Bethlehem. It will take the last areas of land," asserts Aodoni. He claims that even if most of the Har Homa land is owned by Jews — a fact that he and other Arabs have disputed since the 1930s (see hnx) — they would never want Myr to build his "Peace Project."

"Mr. Myr asked the government to take the land," claims Aodoni. "He was the one who initiated expropriation in the first place."

The story of how the expropriation came about is unclear. Six months before the government announced its intention to expropriate the land for Har Homa, the JNF, with the knowledge of Makor, wrote a letter to the Israel Lands Authority: "We should emphasize that the only way to move forward fast with the planning, building and completion of the neighborhood is by the consolidation of all the land in one hand. In order to fulfill this purpose there should be an 'acquisition by law' so that we can create the neighborhood as soon as possible." The Supreme Court, which also claims that the JNF and Makor asked for expropriation, replied that: "The ILA cannot expropriate lands of one owner in order to give it to another for the purpose of establishing a neighborhood."

Myr says that the JNF (and not Makor) had only asked for the "consolidation" of the land for development purposes, and not

published its intention to expropriate 1,850 dunams of land for its own Har Homa project, including land belonging to Myr.

defense of then finance minister Yitzhak Modai's expropriation of the land. "According to the finance minister's opinion, there is very little probability that the owners of the land could develop the land in a reasonable amount of time, if at all. His assumption was that only the municipalities could carry out the responsibilities including the implementation, building and financing of the residential neighborhood."

It doesn't seem like anything will get in the way of the government's building Har Homa: After the government expropriated the land, it took only two months to develop building plans, as opposed to Myr's two decades. (Myr claims that his plans will save \$800 million in development of the project.) A government committee was scheduled to convene to reconsider the expropriation, but the meeting was cancelled.

Even the Supreme Court cases challenging the expropriation and development plans will not halt bulldozers, as no stop orders have been issued.

In the meantime, the Supreme Court's first decision of December 1994 still stands. It upholds the expropriation "in light of the fact that all new neighborhoods in Jerusalem since 1967 were set up in a similar fashion, i.e., expropriation of essential land to create a neighborhood."

Everyone — from the profit-oriented Myr to the politically motivated Seidman — agree on one thing: expropriation is the worst option. "If building will be done with fiat, and not with consultation," said Seidman, "you leave people on alternative but to feel cornered."

expropriation. Whatever the case, the government knew a good idea when it saw one, and six months later the government

"We had to expropriate the land in order to guarantee the establishment of the neighborhood," wrote the Supreme Court in

DEAR RUTHIE

Purim can't mask marital problems

By RUTHIE BLUM

Dear Ruthie, Every year, as Purim draws near, my wife and I end up quarreling over the costume issue. Since I was a child, I have always detested putting on costumes of any kind. My wife, on the other hand, has always loved dressing up. She's also very talented at creating original costumes, and sewing them. (Our kids always win prizes for theirs.)

Every year, one or the other of our gang has a wild Purim party. Every year, my wife will not accept that I want to go to these parties without a costume.

Every year, I end up giving in so as not to spoil her "fun."

This year I am not going to allow her to dictate to me how I will be dressed.

How can I do this without creating a major marital rift?

Dressed Down

Somewhere in Israel

Dear Costume Cringing, If refusal on your part to wear a Purim costume can cause a "major rift" in your marriage, then it's got some heavy cracks in it already.

Your description of the annual feud over the party dress code indicates that the costume question is symbolic of other issues the two of you are not resolving.

It would be beneficial to examine what these other issues might be.

For example, your wife may feel that you are unappreciative of one of her more outstanding talents — talents for which strangers award her prizes.

Perhaps forcing you into donning one of her creations is an expression of frustration or feelings of inadequacy.

You, then, may be responding to her emotional urgency by "giving in" every year on the costume issue.

Perhaps you would do better to respond, instead, by paying genuine heed to her deep-seated needs.

For her part, your wife should examine her own lack of heed to the needs of a husband who detests dressing up.

Rather than forcing you to ignore your ill case at Purim, your wife would do better to help you resolve whatever it is which has caused it since you were a child.

Since Purim seems to bring so much marital baggage to the surface, you could use the upcoming weeks to discuss the issue, rather than fight over it.

Then, putting your foot down about dressing up will become unnecessary, either because your wife will have come to understand your distress or because you will have come to understand hers.

Ideally, it will be a combination of the two.

Letters should be addressed to: "Dear Ruthie," POB 81, 91000 Jerusalem. For E-mail: editors@jpost.co.il

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in brief

Bezeq pays NIS120 million in dividends

Bezeq yesterday paid its stockholders an intermediate dividend totaling NIS 120 million — or 40 percent of its net profit during the first six months of 1996. The payment per share is 16.4 agorit (or 16.4%). Acting Bezeq director-general Avi Hochman said that NIS 91.25m. would be transferred to the state, which owns 77% of Bezeq shares; the British company Cable & Wireless, which owns a tenth of the company, will receive NIS 11.84m. The rest will be divided among scores of other shareholders. Bezeq is required to pay a dividend each year equal to 55% of its annual net profit. The company has not yet published its financial reports for 1996.

Judy Siegel

Telecom talks held with Jordan

The Israel-Jordan steering team for a joint telecom project met yesterday in Tel Aviv. Among the participants were heads of the Jordan Telecommunications Company and a Communications Ministry delegation headed by Haim Haviv.

The team discussed proposed projects, including the laying of an optic fiber cable between Tel Aviv and Amman or along the Jordan Rift from Amman to Aqaba and links to the undersea optic fiber cable off Eilat.

Judy Siegel

International Finance Institute courts Israel

The Institute of International Finance would like Israel to become a member, managing director Charles Dallara said yesterday in between meetings with the country's economic leadership. The IIF, a nonprofit association of financial institutions, conducts research on emerging markets, provides a forum for the private financial community, and lobbies in support of its members' positions regarding global regulatory issues.

Bahrain, Egypt and Saudi Arabia are among the 14 Middle East countries and 45 nations worldwide whose banks, trading companies and/or export credit agencies belong to the institute.

Jennifer Friedlin

Livnat seeks anti-piracy funds

The Communications Ministry has urgently asked the Treasury for more money to expand inspection teams looking for pirate radio stations, some of which cause dangerous interference with Ben-Gurion Airport's control towers.

Currently, only three ministry employees are responsible for locating illegal broadcasting stations. Communications Minister Limor Livnat, now on a working visit in London, called Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy and asked for an urgent meeting early next week with the police and other ministry representatives to discuss the problem.

Judy Siegel

EU agrees to energy tax plan

The European Commission agreed to a controversial draft law yesterday to raise the minimum taxes on motor and heating fuels and extend the taxes to electricity and natural gas. The plan is fiercely opposed by industry, particularly heavy-energy users such as the chemical and automobile sectors. EU finance ministers will have the final word — a task far from easy since they are required to reach a unanimous decision.

It is widely seen as an attempt to introduce a failed carbon dioxide tax to reduce gas emissions by the back door. But European Commissioner Mario Monti, in charge of the bloc's border-free market and tax issues, said it was an unprecedented move to reform the Union's tax structure.

Reuter

3 coalition MKs threaten to rebel after Generali deal

By DAVID HARRIS

Three coalition MKs are refusing to support various Treasury proposals to the Knesset Finance Committee, because it has approved the sale of Migdal Insurance to Assicurazioni Generali, the Italian company which refuses to pay out life insurance policies of Holocaust victims.

MKs Michael Kleiner (Gesher), Avraham Herschson (Likud) and Nissim Dahan (Shas) said yesterday that until the Treasury corrects the situation they will not vote with the government, which means the opposition will effectively hold the majority in the powerful committee.

The three, who received the backing of MK Avoev Shaki (an international lawyer), also said that if Generali does not come up with a serious proposal for compensation to the families of Holocaust victims before the

next Knesset discussion of the issue, they will demand a national boycott of Migdal and Generali.

Furthermore, Kleiner is calling on Finance Committee chairman Avraham Ravitz (United Torah Judaism) to call Finance Minister Dan Meridor to appear next week before the committee to explain how Insurance Commissioner Doron Sborer could approve the sale, and to ask the minister to do his utmost to persuade Generali to pay. Kleiner is also to request that Knesset Speaker Dan Tibon also attend the meeting.

Ravitz last night told *The Jerusalem Post* that he will be happy to consider such a proposal from Kleiner, but cannot confirm such a session until he has considered the issue in more detail. "If there proves to be substantiation for the claims, and I'm under the impression there will be, then of course we will consider the issue and call on

Dan Meridor to attend," said Ravitz.

"It cannot be that Sweden and Holland and others will investigating such claims and yet Israel continues to do business with Generali," said Dahan during yesterday's meeting of the Knesset Insurance sub-committee.

"We're not dealing with economic issues, but the very existence of the Jewish people," added Herschson, who chairs the Knesset Restitution of Jewish Property sub-committee. "In Britain they are running long television reports on the issue. In the US Congress a committee is examining the subject and yet here we're doing nothing. 'People are giving me policies to forward, what can I say to these people — that Israel is throwing them into the garbage?'"

Sborer again argued he doesn't have the legal wherewithal to object to the sale, which is eco-

nominally sound. The sale of Migdal by Bank Leumi is valued at more than \$300 million, one of the largest-ever deals involving the sale of an Israeli company.

Declaring no confidence in Generali's commitments to investigate claims, Kleiner, who chairs the Insurance sub-committee, said in his three terms as an MK he has never witnessed such a negative response to the authority of the Knesset as that currently displayed by Generali.

Generali's legal representative in Israel, Amihud Ben-Porai, defended his company's actions on the basis there is no legal grounds for payments.

However, he said the company will treat any specific requests from MKs with full respect and endeavor to answer written questions.

"This cannot be treated in purely economic terms," responded Shaki, "because these claims are so moral and correct."

Wages eroded by 9.2% in '96

By DAVID HARRIS

The average monthly wage last year rose by 1.2 percent in nominal terms, which means a 9.2% erosion in real terms, according to data published yesterday by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

The average wage ended the year at NIS 5,250. Some 2.163 million people were in jobs at the end of last year, a 4.6% increase from 1995.

When employees in Judea, Samaria and Gaza are included, the average wage fell to NIS 5,198, with a further 37,000 employed.

In terms of the total wages paid to workers, excluding the territories, there was a real-term decline of 6.6% in the last quarter of 1996, compared to the same period a year earlier. At the same time, the number of people employed rose 4%.

In the various industry sectors, wages sank in real terms as follows: agriculture, education, banking, insurance and finance 7.8%; 7.9%; business services 6.6%; and public administration 6.2%.

Unemployment figures will be published today by the Employment Service department of the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry.

In recent months there has been a considerable increase in unemployment. Unemployment rose 0.4% in the fourth quarter to 7.3%, its highest level in the last two years according to bureau statistics. There has been an average quarterly unemployment increase of 2.5% since April, compared to reductions of 3.5% in the equivalent 1995 period.

Microsoft signs deal with firm in Petah Tikva

By DAVID HARRIS

Microsoft Corporation has signed a cooperation agreement with Petah-Tikva-based software developer BackWeb Technologies to expand broadcast channel and delivery options for the American company's Internet Explorer 4.0 version, scheduled for release this summer.

Out of 19 companies around the world offering such Internet products, Microsoft chose the only Israeli company in the field.

BackWeb, established in 1995 by BRM and managed by Eli Bareket, allows Internet users to subscribe free to "channels" of information that appear on the screen while they're working and are clicked if the user wants to access them.

Instead of having to seek out sites in the vast Internet, ones they have selected automatically appear periodically as icons on the screen when new information is available.

The agreement lays the groundwork for the joint creation of a BackWeb-based Microsoft Internet Explorer channel.

"BackWeb's client and server technology, integrated with Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0, is a perfect example of how firms can build on the open, standards-based technologies in Internet Explorer," said Brad Chase, Microsoft's vice president for marketing, Internet client and collaboration, in a statement from Los Angeles. "The power and control that BackWeb's easy-to-use server application gives channels for personalized broadcasting to Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 clients will be a high-value complement to the browser's open broadcast capabilities."



Miners protest in Germany

Thousands of angry miners protest in Bonn yesterday against government plans of Economic Minister Guenter Rexrodt to reduce subsidies for hard coal mining. The signs read 'Our coal does not need an interim depot' (left) and 'Rexrodt is the death of the coal.'

(Reuter)

COMPANY RESULTS

Tadiran's '96 profits more than treble

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK and JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

Tadiran, Israel's largest electronics company and a subsidiary of Koor Industries, reported a 236 percent increase in earnings to NIS 296 million last year from 1995, the company reported yesterday.

Net income for the year included a gain of \$33.7m. from the initial public offering of Tadiran Telecommunications. The subsidiary raised \$69m. from the offering.

However, fourth quarter net profits dropped 12.7% to \$9.6m. from \$11m. in the same 1995 period.

The company blamed the decrease on the registration of one-time tax revenues last year. Income after income taxes increased to \$13.3m. in the fourth quarter from \$12m. in the same period in 1995. Sales increased 6.5% to \$1.11b.

Revenues for the fourth quarter fell to \$268.5m. from \$283.1m. Exports represented more than 50% of fourth quarter sales.

Lower domestic sales and the economic slowdown led to a drop in sales from the telecommunications segment, the appliances and batteries segment, the company said. The decrease in sales was partly offset by a rise in computer software segment sales.

Fourth quarter operating income fell to \$13.3m. from \$17.7m.

Tadiran completed its reorganization last year, according to president and CEO Israel Zamir.

The company currently operates in five business segments — telecommunications, communications, electronic systems, appliances and batteries and computer software.

Tadiran is now managed as a specialized strategic group. All activities have been absorbed by separate companies, each operating on profit and loss basis," he said.

Last year Tadiran Com. was formed to control the key defense activities of the communications segment. Other decentralizations measures included the formation of Tadiran Electronic Systems, Tadiran Spectralink, Tadiran Telematics and Tadiran Batteries, said Zamir.

Elron Electronic Industries reported a 10% increase in annual net income to \$11.3m. last year from \$10.3m. in 1995. Aggregate annual revenues of the companies in the Elron group exceeded \$1.2 billion, similar to 1995.

In the fourth quarter, net income went up to \$3.8m. from \$3.1m. in the same period in 1995. The company said its earning

resulted from three main sources: Elron's share in the net income of affiliated companies, gain on equity from a change in holdings and income from the sale of investments and holdings.

Elron CEO Uzia Galil said the company's plans for 1997 include honing in on the information technology market.

The company also said it hopes to reap the fruits of Elbit's demerger this year. Elron owns 40% of each of the three companies, which were formed as a result of Elbit Ltd.'s 1996 demerger.

Based in Haifa, Elron is a multinational high-tech holding company that, through its affiliates, is engaged with a group of companies operating in the fields of medical diagnostic imaging, advanced defense electronics, communication, semiconductors, networking services and Internet software.

Discount Invest. buys stake in Nitzanim

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Discount Investments and its affiliate PEC, members of the IDB Group, have acquired Hevrat Ha'ovdim's shares in Nitzanim — the entrepreneurial center of the Nuclear Research Center at Nahal Sorek.

The investment companies purchased 50 percent of Nitzanim for \$8.5 million. The remaining shares are owned by Isorad, the economic

arm of the research center, which is owned by the government.

Isorad is mainly engaged in adaptation of military know-how and techniques to civilian operations. Many of the country's hi-tech companies established over the past decade are based on know-how from the military and military industries, which have suffered from a drop in government budgets.

Nitzanim operates a technology incubator in the framework of the Office of the Chief Scientist at the Industry and Trade Ministry. Since its establishment four years ago,

ideas developed at the center have led to the establishment of 15 companies, including five that have raised capital from various institutions in Israel, France and the US to finance development and manufacturing phases.

The investment is part of Discount Investment's business strategy to expand its involvement in technology incubators as a method of expanding activities of its high-tech subsidiaries. The know-how accumulated by the incubators can be adopted for civilian use, the company said.

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT
Public Tender No. 3/97
Provision of Outsourcing Computer Services

Bids are invited for the provision of outsourcing computer services. This notice is also being published in the Hebrew press, and the text of the Hebrew notice is to be regarded as definitive.

A. Information Required:

1. Bidders must be organizations, registered in Israel, as required by law.
2. Bidders must have had an annual turnover in the 1996 tax year of at least NIS25 million, from activities in outsourcing, managing computer installations, development and maintenance of software and Help Desk (excluding sale of hardware, and software licensing) as shown in the audited balance sheet.
3. Bidders must have at least 40 salaried, full-time employees, working in the fields noted in Para. 2 above.
4. Bidders must have at least two years' experience in outsourcing, and in fields similar to those referred to in the tender documents, obtained in working with at least two customers, the scope of the annual volume of work involved being at least NIS 1 million for each customer.
5. In the context of Paras. 2, 3 & 4, the term, "bidder," includes a subsidiary company, with the requirements of these paragraphs applying to the parent company, there being close professional connections between the companies.
6. The manager responsible for the provision of the services concerned must have at least 10 years' experience with computers and information systems, and at least 3 years' experience in managing systems and staff; he should have at least a first degree in a relevant field, and additional relevant training.
7. Bidders will submit all the permits specified in the Public Business Companies Law (enforcement of the requirement to keep account books and to pay tax demands) 1976, and a certificate showing that the bidder is a registered trader, as defined in the Added Value Tax Law.
8. Bids should be accompanied by an unconditional bank guarantee for NIS80,000, made out in favor of the Ministry of the Environment, and valid until 30.10.97.
9. An agreement will be signed with the successful bidder, similar to the sample agreement attached to the tender documents.
10. The agreement with the successful bidder will be for a period of five years, with an option for extension of two years.

B. The Ministry's Conditions

1. Bids which are not in accordance with the tender conditions, or which do not have all the required documents attached will not be considered.
2. No undertaking is given to accept any bid.
3. No undertaking is given to accept the lowest bid.
4. The right is reserved to cancel the tender, if the best bid does not meet the Ministry's requirements.
5. The right is reserved to negotiate with those bidders competing for the tender, whose bids are found to be suitable.
6. The successful bidder will be chosen, by reference to the following: the quality of the proposal, and its appropriateness for the purposes of the Ministry; the experience of the bidder, the financial standing of the bidder; an opinion of the bidder and the general impression obtained.
7. The Ministry may choose two or more successful bidders.

C. General

1. The tender documents and the specification may be obtained from the Ministry of the Environment, Banam Dept., 5 Rehov Kanfai Nesharim, Givat Shaul, Jerusalem, between 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., against payment of NIS2,000 (non-refundable under any circumstances), which should be paid into the Account of the Ministry of the Environment at the Postal Bank, acc. no. 0-248488, earmarked for Tender No. 3/97.
2. A meeting of bidders will be held on Thursday, March 27, 1997, at 9:30 a.m., at the Shalom Hotel, 25 Rehov Shahrul, Bayit Vegan, Jerusalem. Participation in this meeting is a condition of tendering.
3. Bids should be submitted in five copies in Hebrew, in accordance with the *Mafshar* Procedure, by 12 noon on 30.4.97, in a closed envelope marked 'Tender No. 3/97,' and placed in the tenders box in the Banam Dept., 5 Rehov Kanfai Nesharim (4th floor) Givat Shaul, Jerusalem.
4. Bids may be submitted, only by those who have purchased the specification and the tender documents.

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ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

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TARGET 0210
Mutual Fund for Foreign Residents

Date: 11.3.97
Purchase Price: 163.37
Redemption Price: 161.02

leumi pia לזמן יא

PRIME PRIME
Mutual Fund for Foreign Residents

Date: 11.3.97
Purchase Price: 114.89
Redemption Price: 113.40

leumi pia לזמן יא

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96)				
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.75	5.00	5.375	
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.675	-4.000	4.250	
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.625	1.625	2.125	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.825	0.750	1.000	
Yen (10 million yen)				
(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)				
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (12.3.97)				
CHECKS AND TRANSFERS	BANKNOTES	Repo		
		Buy	Sell	Rate**
Currency basket	3.6162	3.6746	3.5504	
U.S. dollar	3.3420	3.3990	3.28	3.3730
German mark	1.6259	1.6258	1.62	1.6757
Pound sterling	5.3135	5.3283	5.22	5.4873
French franc	0.5800	0.5894	0.57	0.5895
Japanese yen (100)	2.7215	2.7854	2.67	2.7477
Dutch florin	1.7384	1.7955	1.72	1.7509
Swiss franc	2.2666	2.3032	2.20	2.2559
Swedish krona	0.4351	0.4422	0.42	0.4336
Norwegian krona	0.4857	0.4978	0.48	0.4948
Danish krona	0.5131	0.5214	0.50	0.5178
Finnish mark	0.6548	0.6654	0.64	0.6569
Canadian dollar	2.4465	2.4850	2.40	2.4579
Australian dollar	3.8217	3.8877	3.80	3.8592
S. African rand	0.7822	0.7844	0.77	0.7790
Belgian franc (10)	0.9484	0.9637	0.93	0.9579
Austrian schilling (10)	2.7003	2.8252	2.73	2.8057
Italian lire (1000)	1.9859	1.9777	1.96	1.9844
Jordanian dinar	4.6500	4.9700	4.85	4.7728
Egyptian pound	0.9600	1.0300	0.98	1.0119
Israeli new sheqel	1.0000	1.0000	1.00	1.0000
Irish punt	5.1769	5.2868	5.08	5.2212
Spanish peseta (100)	2.3070	2.3443	2.28	2.3283

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel. SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

מזכרתון השכל

ISRAELI SHARES IN NEW YORK

Table with columns for company names, last price, and change. Includes AMEX and NASDAQ sections.

MISHTANIM LEADING 100 TASE ISSUES

Table listing the top 100 TASE issues with columns for company name, last price, and change.

INTERNATIONAL SHARES

Table listing international shares with columns for company name, last price, and change.

TASE ROUNDOFF

Table showing TASE roundoff data with columns for company name, last price, and change.

Indexes fall for third consecutive day

Stock indexes fell for a third day yesterday as investors focused on February's consumer price index. The CPI is expected to show prices rose one percent in the month and is unlikely to prompt...

By FELICE MARANZ. The Bank of Israel to reduce interest rates. Declining companies included Koor Industries Ltd., which produces some 7% of Israel's industrial output...

Key Representative Rates. US Dollar...NIS 3.3730 + 0.15%. Sterling...NIS 5.6375 - 0.72%. Mark...NIS 1.9757 + 0.06%.

WORLD MARKET ROUNDOFF

European bourses close sharply lower. LONDON (Reuters) - European bourses closed sharply down yesterday as Wall Street was hit by profit-taking with American investors jittery about the direction of interest rates.

Other Stock Market Indexes. FTSE 100...4,422.3 - 22.0. Nikkei 225...10,937.0 - 44.4. Hang Seng...10,911.1 - 149.6.

DOLLAR CROSS-RATES (US)

Table showing dollar cross-rates for various currencies like Pound, Deutsche Mark, Swiss Franc, etc.

US COMMODITIES

Table showing US commodity prices for items like Coffee, Cotton, Wheat, etc.

LONDON COMMODITIES

Table showing London commodity prices for items like Coffee, Copper, etc.

SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

Table showing spot market metal prices for Gold, Silver, etc.

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

Table showing New York metal futures prices for Gold, Silver, etc.

LONDON METAL FIXES

Table showing London metal fix prices for Gold, Silver, etc.

SOURCE: S&P COMSTOCK (DATE 12-MAR-97)

DATA COMMUNICATIONS VIA ABA

Foreign financial data courtesy of Comstock Trading Ltd. Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds.

TEL AVIV SHARES DATA SUPPLIED BY PACIFIC MEDITERRANEAN INVESTMENTS

TEL 09-938-5873. All other data supplied by Comstock Trading Ltd., Tel. 02-624-4963. Due to technical failures data may be inaccurate.

PARIS

Table showing Paris stock market data for various companies.

FRANKFURT

Table showing Frankfurt stock market data for various companies.

AMEX

Table showing AMEX stock market data.

NASDAQ

Table showing NASDAQ stock market data.

NEW YORK

Large table showing New York stock market data for various companies.

LAST CHANGE

Table showing last change data for various companies.

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Sweden tops host Israel, 1-0

BY DEREK FATTAL

Sweden ended deserved 1-0 winners in last night's friendly international against Israel at the National Stadium, Ramat Gan. The Swedes' victory was provided by a 69th-minute goal from Gothenburg's Andreas Andersson who embarrassed three Israeli defenders in the penalty area before driving the ball into the gap between Rafi Cohen and the near post.

The result was Israel's second defeat in three preparatory matches aimed at tuning up the national squad for the crucial World Cup qualifier away to Luxembourg at the end of the month. With five core players last night missing it is difficult to estimate Israel's chances of getting the victory it so desperately needs from its next outing.

The schizophrenic character that so often personifies the national squad came back to haunt last night. In the first half, the Israelis exhibited pleasing measured soccer, as midfield deputies Yossi Abukis and Ran Ben-Shimon played to perfection, sending every pass to a correct address.

Accordingly, Israel's attack was able to stretch and penetrate the Swedish area to the extent that the hosts could have been two goals up before the halftime whistle as center forward Alon Mizrahi in particular managed to create scoring chances.

In sharp contrast after the interval, the same two midfielders appeared to have stayed in the dressing room, such was their lack of contribution to the national cause. The back line led so valiantly by Arik Benado and Felix Halfon earlier also got the jitters. With such a deep character transformation, the Swedes were bound to win given the greater time they had in possession.

The Israelis should have scored as early as the fifth minute when Moshe Glam sent Ronnie Rosenthal on his way to goal, only for the Tottenham player to fire into Thomas Ravelli's side netting. Sweden's sole opportunity before the break was wasted by Bologna's Kent Andersson who sliced his effort skywards in the 19th minute. That miss singled the start of Israel's best phase.



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS - Sweden midfielder Anders Andersson (r) battles for the ball with Israel defender Arik Benado. Sweden won the international friendly, 1-0. (Kestner)

After the interval, it was one-way traffic as the Swedes speeded up the play and managed to pin their opponents back. Only Alon Hazan - brought in for Glam - seemed capable of getting the ball forward.

The stage was therefore clearly set for a Swedish win when Andersson waltzed methodically into Cohen's area with 21 minutes to go, turned Nir Klinger, then Ben-Shimon and Amir Shelach before choosing his spot. It is a matter of speculation as to whether Cohen should have saved the resulting goal. Two further chances came Sweden's way later in the match but Cohen was in place to deny both attempts by Jesper Blomqvist.

The introduction of Guy Yitzhak - for his international debut - and

Shai Holtzman in the final quarter hour gave Israel a little more sharpness but not enough to salvage the match.

After the game, national coach Shlomo Scharf summed up saying, "We were naive in front of goal and our players lack the stamina and conviction to play at this level." Scharf pointed to the low standard of the Israeli league for this. "I expect a much better performance and far greater motivation against Luxembourg," Scharf added.

Swedish coach Tommy Svensson was in better mood at the post-match press conference. "We were disorganized and couldn't find our rhythm in the first half. But in the second half we settled down and didn't allow Israel to find their game. All in all, this was a very

good test for us."

In the 12 matches between the two nations, the Swedes are 7-4-1. Teams: Israel: 1-Rafi Cohen, 2-Felix Halfon, 3-Moshe Glam (14-Alon Hazan 45th minute), 4-Amir Shelach, 5-Arik Benado, 6-Nir Klinger, 7-Alon Mizrahi (19-Shai Holtzman 75th), 8-Yossi Abukis (15-Guy Yitzhak 76th), 9-Ronnie Rosenthal, 10-Ran Ben-Shimon, 11-Eli Ohana. Sweden: 1-Thomas Ravelli (12-Magnus Hedman 45th), 2-Roland Nilsson, 3-Christiaan Carlsson, 4-Andreas Jacobsson, 5-Teddy Lucic (15-Niclas Alexandersson 72nd), 6-Johan Mjallby, 7-Hakan Mild, 8-Anders Andersson, 9-Andreas Andersson, 10-Kent Andersson (Mathias Svensson 61st), 11-Jesper Blomqvist.

Sweden's 2-0 win in the first leg of the Euro League quarterfinals on Tuesday night was not enough to overcome Boro's 2-0 win in the first leg.

Their foes will be Leicester City, who made up for the disappointment of a recent FA Cup exit to a controversial penalty by reaching the League Cup final on Tuesday.

Leicester beat Wimbledon on the away goals rule with a 1-1 draw in their semifinal second leg after the two teams had fought a 0-0 draw in the first leg.

The result ended Wimbledon's hopes of appearing in both English cup finals, the London club having already reached the FA Cup semifinals. Leicester, ousted 1-0 at Chelsea in a fifth-round FA Cup replay after a disputed penalty, came from behind to secure success over Wimbledon.

Wimbledon seized the initiative after 23 minutes. Leicester defender Julian Watts miscued an attempted clearance on the left, Marcus Gayle took possession, sped forward and unleashed a fierce shot which beat American goalkeeper Casey Keller.

But Leicester equalized eight minutes into the second half from a free-kick on the right, Simon Grayson rising at the far post to head home what proved to be the crucial goal.

Leicester clinging on to their slender advantage through extra time, Gary Parker twice clearing off the line from successive Wimbledon corners in the last three minutes.

In Premier League action last night, it was Leeds 0, Southampton 0; Sheffield Wednesday 2, Sunderland 1; West Ham 3, Chelsea 2. On Tuesday, Nottingham Forest drew 1-1 at Blackburn.

Leicester to face Boro in League Cup final

Jordan is 6th-leading scorer

BOSTON (AP) - Michael Jordan became the NBA's sixth all-time leading scorer with 32 points that boosted his career total to 26,399 in the Chicago Bulls' 117-106 victory over the Boston Celtics on Tuesday night.

Jordan, who has been playing for 12 seasons, moved past former Celtic John Havlicek's total from 16 seasons. With 20 games left this season, Jordan needs just 312 points to move into fifth place past Oscar Robertson's 26,710 points in 14 seasons.

Hawks 106, Jazz 99

Steve Smith scored 27 points and Mookie Blaylock had 26 as host Atlanta won its fifth straight game.

Atlanta made a season-high 40 free throws and shut down the Jazz after John Stockton's 3-pointer with 5:36 remaining gave Utah a 92-90 lead. Although losing, the Jazz became the second team, after the Bulls, to clinch a playoff spot.

Hornets 98, Grizzlies 92

Glen Rice scored 20 of his 24 points in the second half and host Charlotte struggled before extending its longest winning streak of the season to six games.

Jordan is 6th-leading scorer

Marbury finished with 24 points and nine assists. He was 5-for-16 from the field and 14-of-19 from the free throw line.

Gugliotta and Doug West each finished with 13 points, and Kevin Garnett added 11 points and 12 rebounds.

Mavericks 91, Knicks 83

Host Dallas caught the Knicks apparently still celebrating their upset of Chicago and ended New York's seven-game winning streak.

Michael Finley scored 23 points and Erick Strickland added 22, including 12-for-12 shooting from the free throw line.

Strickland's four free throws in the final 3:69 iced the game.

The Knicks failed for the third time this season to extend a winning streak to eight games. Their previous seven-game runs came to an end with a 34-point loss at Detroit and a 20-point loss at Seattle.

Heat 108, Bucks 93

Tim Hardaway had 29 points and made six 3-pointers and reserve center Isaac Austin added a season-high 26 points as Miami won on the road.

P.J. Brown had a season-high 19 points as the Heat beat the Bucks for the 17th straight time, including nine in a row at the Bradley Center.

Washington 27, Nets 23

Washington's 18th straight home win was snapped by the Nets.

For Maccabi, it's all or Efes

Tel Aviv hoopsters face host Efes Pilsen in rubber match

By BRIAN FREEMAN

A similar boisterous bunch will be on hand tonight in Istanbul, but history will be thrown out the window once the game begins.

In order to give themselves a fair chance at victory, Maccabi must play the type of team defense it demonstrated on Tuesday at Yad Elyahu. The Israelis must also be patient on offense and connect on a high percentage of its free throws, as every point will be crucial.

Who will provide Maccabi with the outside shooting is a worrisome concern. With Doron Sheffer (3.0 points on 18.7 percent shooting in the series) and Oded Katash (6.5 points on 25 percent shooting) well below their European averages, the Israelis had to rely on Boris Radovic in Game 1 and Derrick Sharp on Tuesday to provide the long-range firepower. Will there be somebody to step up tonight?

So far, Maccabi has been successful in containing star point guard Petar Naumoski, who is six points below his Euro League average in the series and has not had his usually decisive influence on the flow of action. Preventing him from erupting with a monster game must be one of Maccabi's main goals.

The game is scheduled to be broadcast live on Channel 1 starting at 6 p.m.

Maccabi Tel Aviv's stats in Final 16 series

Player	Scoring average	Avg. before series	Shooting %	Shooting % before series	Free throw %
Buck Johnson	18.5	14.3	61.9% (12-21)	49.4% (32-78)	80.9% (10-11)
Randy White	11.5	15.4	65.5% (15-19)	52.9% (100-118)	100% (8-9)
Boris Radovic	11.0	5.0	80.0% (4-5)	41.5% (22-33)	0% (0-0)
Nedav Henefeld	10.5	7.4	66.7% (8-12)	50.5% (48-91)	56.5% (5-9)
Oded Katash	9.0	4.3	60.0% (5-10)	38.7% (19-49)	81.0% (4-5)
Erez Leaf	6.5	10.1	25.0% (2-5)	33.3% (40-120)	80.0% (4-5)
Doron Sheffer	5.0	7.3	44.4% (4-9)	43.5% (27-62)	100% (2-2)
Constantin Popa	3.0	11.8	16.7% (3-18)	48.6% (71-146)	0% (0-0)
	3.0	3.0	60.0% (3-5)	51.1% (23-45)	0% (0-2)

Efes Pilsen's stats in Final 16 series

Player	Scoring average	Avg. before series	Shooting %	Shooting % before series	Free throw %
Utik Sarica	15.0	10.8	47.0% (8-17)	40.0% (58-145)	85.7% (6-7)
Petar Naumoski	15.0	21.3	38.0% (8-21)	50.7% (101-199)	85.7% (2-4)
Vassili Koroneev	15.0	13.8	57.1% (8-14)	50.0% (99-138)	86.6% (13-15)
Tamer Oguc	10.0	6.5	64.3% (9-14)	53.0% (44-83)	100% (2-2)
Mirsad Turkcan	9.5	11.7	26.9% (7-26)	57.4% (50-87)	86.7% (4-5)
Derrick Alston	8.0	3.0	35.7% (5-14)	48.9% (22-45)	85.7% (6-7)
Volkmar Aydin	0	3.7	0% (0-2)	34.7% (18-48)	0% (0-0)

Israel gains 2nd team in Euro League

Despite the loss by Hapoel Jerusalem in the European Cup quarterfinals on Tuesday to Iraklis Salonika, Israel will still gain a second representative in the Euro League next season.

Every team which reaches the Final Four of the European Cup tournament secures an additional place for its country in the Euro League.

However, three of the teams in the semifinals - Real Madrid, Verona and Racing Paris - represent countries which already have the maximum three clubs. (Iraklis won back the third spot for Greece, which was set to lose it due to the last-place finish of Panionios in one of the Euro League's four groups this season.)

This leaves three Euro League spots open, to be contested among the four teams which lost in the European Cup quarterfinals: Turkey, Israel, Poland and Portugal.

FIBA decides which of these countries receives the extra Euro League spot based on the ranking of each nation's league. Since Israel is certain to be ranked at least above Poland, this assures Israel an extra spot.

Joseph Hoffman & Ott Lewis: Sports Editors

CLASSIFIEDS

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SPORTS in brief

F-1 driver rules out mistake by Senna

IMOLA, Italy (AP) - Former Formula One driver Pierluigi Martini testified yesterday that only a problem with his car could have caused Ayrton Senna's fatal crash during the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix.

Martini, testifying in the trial of six top F-1 officials charged with manslaughter for the death of the three-time world champion, said "a driver like Ayrton Senna would not have sped off the track at that point if not for some problem. But I don't know what the problem could have been," said the 35-year-old Italian.

Prosecutor Maurizio Passarini contends that a badly modified steering column in Senna's car cracked, causing the crash.

Senna failed to take the Tamburello corner and crashed against a concrete wall. The Brazilian died of massive head injuries.

The prosecutor contends that the steering column broke after it was modified to make it shorter.

Ferdinand likely sidelined

NEWCASTLE (AP) - A hamstring injury will likely keep Newcastle striker Les Ferdinand out of next Tuesday's UEFA Cup quarterfinal second-leg game against Monaco.

Ferdinand aggravated the injury when he came on as a substitute in Newcastle's 4-3 loss to Liverpool on Monday night.

He limped off after just 11 minutes.

Newcastle is already without its top striker, Alan Shearer, who is sidelined after undergoing surgery for a groin injury.

Philippoussis defeats Agassi behind 23 aces

INDIAN WELLS, Ca (AP) - Defending champion Michael Chang needed just 75 minutes to beat unseeded Sjeng Schalken 6-4, 6-3 Tuesday night and advance to the third round of the Newswweek Champions Cup.

Mark Philippoussis, the hardest-hitting server in tennis, had 23 aces as he defeated 10th-seeded Andre Agassi 7-6 (7-5), 7-6 (7-5). Agassi, considered to have one of the best returns of serve, could not handle the Australian's 23 aces, one clocked at 139 mph (223 kph). Philippoussis, the winner of last week's Franklin Classic in Scottsdale, Arizona, faced Agassi for the first time.

WHAT'S ON

CRITIC'S CHOICE

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Ilan Schul replaces Mario Venzago, who canceled his performances with the Israel Symphony Orchestra...



Ilan Schul conducts Mendelssohn in Tel Aviv.

Doron Solomon leads his Kibbutz Chamber Orchestra in Paris's Concertino for Strings and excerpts from de Falla's El Amor Brujo...

The spring concert season at the Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem opens Saturday (8:30 p.m.) with music by Britten, Mendelssohn, Gounod, Brahms, Faure and others...

JAZZ

HELEN KAYE

Tenor saxophonist Ari Brown returns as the last star of the Jazz at the Museum series...

THEATER

HELEN KAYE

Cain't say no to Oklahoma!, the Light Opera Group of the Negev (LOGON) production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's all-time great classic musical...

The TheaterNetto festival and competition of monodramas kicks off tonight at Suzanne Dellal. Among the recommended plays of the 12 on offer...

TV

- CHANNEL 1: 6:30 News flash, 6:31 News in Arabic, 6:45 Exercise Time, 7:00 Good Morning Israel...

CHANNEL 2

- 6:15 Today's Programs, 6:30 Sharky and George, 7:00 Breakfast Magazine, 8:00 The Third Hour, 10:00 Pablo...

CHANNEL 3

- 6:15 Today's Programs, 6:30 Sharky and George, 7:00 Breakfast Magazine, 8:00 The Third Hour, 10:00 Pablo...

CHANNEL 4

- 6:30 News flash, 6:31 News in Arabic, 6:45 Exercise Time, 7:00 Good Morning Israel...

CHANNEL 5

- 6:30 News flash, 6:31 News in Arabic, 6:45 Exercise Time, 7:00 Good Morning Israel...

CHANNEL 10

- 6:30 News flash, 6:31 News in Arabic, 6:45 Exercise Time, 7:00 Good Morning Israel...

MOVIE CHANNEL (4)

- 11:30 Nightmare in the Daylight (1992) (R), 13:00 New in the Cinema, 13:10 Dishonored Lady (1947)...

CHANNEL 1

- 15:30 Motorcade from Mars, 16:45 Body, 18:00 Friends of Shosh, 18:25 Byker Grove, 18:45 Eye on TV...

CHANNEL 2

- 6:15 Today's Programs, 6:30 Sharky and George, 7:00 Breakfast Magazine, 8:00 The Third Hour, 10:00 Pablo...

CHANNEL 3

- 6:15 Today's Programs, 6:30 Sharky and George, 7:00 Breakfast Magazine, 8:00 The Third Hour, 10:00 Pablo...

CHANNEL 4

- 6:30 News flash, 6:31 News in Arabic, 6:45 Exercise Time, 7:00 Good Morning Israel...

CHANNEL 5

- 6:30 News flash, 6:31 News in Arabic, 6:45 Exercise Time, 7:00 Good Morning Israel...

PRIME TIME TV

Table with columns for time slots (19:30, 20:00, 20:30, 21:00, 21:30, 22:00, 22:30, 23:00) and program titles like News, Actors, Candid Camera, Dan Shilon Live, Backtrack, American Gothic.

PRIME SPORTS

- 6:00 Watersport World, 7:00 Table Tennis: Qatar Cup, 8:00 Spanish Soccer League, 9:30 Athletics: Federation Cup Cross Country, 10:00 Golf: This is PGA Tour, 11:00 Indian League Soccer, 12:00 ISU Skating, 23:30 European News, 23:30 Insight, 00:00 World Business Today Update, 00:30 World Sport, 1:00 World View, 2:30 Moneyline, 3:00 World News.

VOICE OF MUSIC

- 6:05 Morning Concert, 9:05 Bach: Violin concerto in A minor; Mendelssohn: Piano trio no. 2 in C minor; 19:30 World Sport, 2:30 Moneyline, 3:00 World News.

BBC WORLD

- News on the hour, 6:05 Pandora's Box (R), 10:05 Great Journeys (R), 11:30 Holiday (R), 14:05 Horizon (R), 15:15 World Business Report, 15:30 Asia-Pacific Newhour, 16:30 Top Gear (R), 17:05 Pandora's Box (R), 18:30 Film '97 (R), 19:30 The Clothes Show, 20:00 The World Today, 22:05 Correspondent (R), 22:50 Earth Report (R), 23:30 Tomorrow's World, 00:00 World News & Business Report, 2:10 Newswright.

CNN INTERNATIONAL

- News throughout the day, 6:30 World Report, 7:30 Insight (R), 8:30 Moneyline (R), 9:30 World Sport, 10:30 Showbiz Today, 11:30 CNN Newsworld, 12:30 World Report, 13:30 American Edition, 18:45 Q & A (R), 14:00 Asian News, 14:30 World Sport, 15:30 Asian News, 16:00 Larry King Live.

STAR PLUS

- 6:00 Master Chefs of...

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Cryptic crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

SOLUTIONS

Solutions for the cryptic crossword puzzle, including words like 'Resonant sound from a Czech orchestra' and 'Used a lever to lift'.

QUICK CROSSWORD

Quick crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

MOVIES

Movie listings for various theaters including Jerusalem Cinematheque, Hadera, Karmiel, Kiryat Shmona, Ramat Gan, and others, listing titles and showtimes.

Peres: Israel should hold its own summit

By MICHAL YUDELMAN

The Labor Party yesterday called on the Palestinians to return to the negotiating table and on both sides to prevent the escalation towards violence.

Labor yesterday convened an emergency meeting of its executive committee to discuss the grave deterioration in Israel's relations with the Arab states and the Palestinians. Labor also is preparing for the no-confidence motion to be presented against Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's government next Monday.

Labor Chairman MK Shimon Peres made it clear he would not take part in the international convention Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat is organizing in Gaza on Saturday, proposing another conference be held - with the same participants

- in Jerusalem one day later.

Peres said the crisis between Israel and the Arab world is the worst ever - both in scope and intensity - since the signing of the Oslo agreement a few years ago.

Earlier yesterday, Peres said, "This government's basic problem is not deciding to build in Har Homa or not, but the contradiction between the peace process and the government's position. Hence Netanyahu makes a gesture towards the Arabs one time, and towards the right wing another time. He's zigzagging: at one point he upsets one side, and at the next he upsets the other. You can't conduct a peace process in two contradictory directions at the same time."

Peres said that relations between Israel and the Arabs "had been different and could be different."

He noted that contrary to Netanyahu's statements, "he did not inherit a bad security situation, but a very good one. Arafat had quashed terrorism two months before the elections, and has been keeping it down since."

"We too built in Jerusalem, but there is a way to build houses, not scandals. Much can be done wisely, gradually, not with drum beating and trumpets. Netanyahu has mobilized the whole world against us in the Jerusalem issue, both in the tunnel affair and now, with contradictory, confusing statements."

Labor MK Yossi Beilin said that if Netanyahu announces his intention to evacuate 10 percent of the territory and put off the construction in Har Homa until after the permanent settlement, Labor would not join the no-confidence motion next Monday.

Journalists protest government incitement against them

By MICHAL YUDELMAN

The Tel Aviv Journalists Association yesterday warned of violence against their number, in view of the increasing incitement against the media by senior officials in the government.

The Association expressed disappointment at the silence of Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein and State Prosecutor Edna Arbel following the calls of "death to the media" in the Likud central committee meeting last week.

The Association may file police complaints against senior figures, including Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, association chairman Arye Avneri of *Yediot Aharonot* said at a press conference yesterday.

"Never has an Israeli government attacked and incited against the media as this one has," Avneri said.

Avneri said he gave a list of statements by senior figures to legal advisors to examine whether official police complaints can be lodged against them for incitement, to start an investigation.

Association director Razi Guterman expressed concern over prime minister's office director-general Avigdor Liberman's statements to the effect that he will "settle accounts" with certain journalists and that there are journalists who must be kicked out. He said Netanyahu should have bushed the people shouting "death to the media" at the Likud gathering. Instead, his spokesman said Netanyahu had beard or said nothing against the media.

"But we all saw him, in re-run broadcasts, responding to these calls."

Guterman said Netanyahu's obsession since being elected prime minister has been attacking the media. "Criticizing the media is legitimate, but inciting against journalists is dangerous to the freedom of expression and to democracy," he said.

The speakers also protested against the investigation into the "leak" of the cabinet protocol in the Bar-On Affair, noting that the attorney-general was formerly cabinet secretary and knows the routine of "leaks" from cabinet meetings. Already there is evidence that the inquiry has "dried up" information sources, who fear being interrogated. This obstructs journalists' work, Avneri said.



Equal opportunity play

MK Adisu Massala (Labor) poses yesterday with two nursery-school pupils in Ramle and part of the first shipment of some 500 dark-skinned dolls he organized from donors in the US. Massala said the dolls, to be distributed at nursery schools throughout the country, are to provide all children, not only those of Ethiopian origin, with a more natural choice of play objects.

(Dan Ossendyren/Israel Sun)

WEATHER

Cohin 9-18

Haifa 10-22

Tiberias 10-22

Afula 9-23

Sameria 10-18

Tel Aviv 12-19

Jerusalem 10-17

Benehabshe 11-22

Dead Sea 14-24

Eilat 12-27

Forecast: Partly cloudy.

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Forecast
Amsterdam	10	10	partly cloudy
Berlin	10	10	cloudy
Buenos Aires	14	14	cloudy
Caracas	24	24	partly cloudy
Chicago	27	27	cloudy
Copenhagen	18	18	clear
Frankfurt	18	18	clear
Geneva	18	18	clear
Helsinki	18	18	clear
Hong Kong	21	21	clear
Jakarta	24	24	clear
London	11	11	cloudy
Los Angeles	10	10	partly cloudy
Madrid	10	10	clear
Moscow	10	10	clear
Mumbai	24	24	clear
New York	10	10	clear
Paris	10	10	clear
Rome	10	10	clear
Stockholm	10	10	clear
Sydney	18	18	clear
Tokyo	18	18	clear
Toronto	10	10	clear
Vienna	10	10	clear
Zurich	10	10	partly cloudy

Fighting in zone

Hizbullah guerrillas fired mortar rounds at a South Lebanese Army unit on patrol in the security zone's eastern sector last night. No casualties or damage were reported. IDF and SLA units returned fire.

(Itim)

Panther helicopter fleet joins the navy

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Four new Panther helicopters officially joined the Israel Navy yesterday, giving it a new generation of enhanced weapons systems believed to greatly extend its offensive arm. A fifth helicopter is to be delivered shortly.

The Panther, known in Hebrew as *Atalef* (bat) replaces the sea-based Dolphin, one of which crashed at sea last September killing all three of its crew. The deal cost the IDF \$63 million.

Three of the blue and gray Panthers flew yesterday into the Ramat David Air Base, led by the navy's last remaining Dolphin. Families of the pilots and invited guests gathered on the sunny tarmac applauded as the squadron's emblem was affixed to the aircraft.

"This is a day which strengthens the navy, the air force, and the IDF," said OC Air Force Maj.-Gen. Eitan Ben-Eliyahu. "A lot of missions await you, but go slowly... from tomorrow the ceremonies will be over, and you return to training and to operations if the need arises; do it as best as you can."

The ceremony was somewhat marred by the often-noted



A Panther helicopter lands on the deck of a Sa'ar missile ship. (IDF Spokesman)

absence of the crew of the ill-fated Dolphin, including Lt.-Col. Benzi Bachar, who saw the project from its inception and was to have led the first Panther squadron.

"My husband used to say, 'This is all we have and we have to win with it,' and this is what I'm trying to do," said Bachar's widow, Shlomit. "It's painful and happily moving at the same time."

The atmosphere in the air force since 73 servicemen were killed in the February 4 collision between two transport helicopters is still heavy. Ben-Eliyahu refused to be interviewed by the media and bad actually ordered IDF spokesmen not to allow journalists to approach him.

"Something happened in the air force among the helicopter force," said Lt.-Col. Z, the Panther squadron commander. "There is no doubt the Yasur helicopter tragedy was a blow to the squadron... When you're getting back to routine, this national mourning hits you and it of course causes difficulties and uncomfortable feelings," he said.

The Panther is an updated version of the Dolphin. Known by its integral tail rotor, the Panther is a new-generation aircraft that will enhance the weapons systems on navy missile boats by expanding their visible horizon and guiding anti-ship Harpoon missiles to their targets. They will also hunt submarines and carry out search and rescue operations.

The navy purchased the French-designed Panther from the American Eurocopter Corp.

Built by the French Aerospatiale company, the Panther replaces the Dolphin, which has been in service since 1985.

The purchase of the Panthers found the navy embroiled in controversy, when it was discovered Israel paid nearly \$12 million more than it should have, with Israeli and American intermediaries pocketing the difference. At least three people were convicted of fraud and Vice-Adm. (res.) Alex Eyal, former director of procurement for the navy, has been questioned over the sales scheme.

The Panther's three-man crew is made up of a pilot, navigator, and a communications officer. The Panther takes off from and lands on a small aft platform on the navy's cruiser class Sa'ar 4.5 and Sa'ar 5 missile ships, nicknamed "the smallest aircraft carriers in the world."

The cooperation between the air force and navy lets the chopper be maintained at sea. The Panther is based on the Dolphin's original mid-1970s design, but its problematic US-built engine has been replaced with a more powerful French one. Its avionics have all been upgraded a generation.

Chopper crash report delayed

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai agreed yesterday to a request for an extension by the commission of inquiry into the February 4 collision of two transport helicopters that killed 73 servicemen.

The report, which was to have been completed by March 20, will now be presented on April 15, the Defense Ministry said.

Commission head David Ivry requested the delay in response to demands by the attorneys of four officers, who may face disciplinary action due to the commission's findings, that the commission hear more testimony.

Ivry said the collection of evidence was in its final stages, but that the committee found itself obligated to allow the four officers the right to a hearing and to call witnesses before the commission.

Two weeks after the crash, the inquiry presented an interim report which noted that murky regulations may have led to the crash.

Ivry's letter said the commission would try very hard to keep the extended investigation to less than a month. Copies of the letter also were sent to Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak and Judge Advocate General Brig.-Gen. Uri Shoham.

The four officers involved were questioned under caution and have sought legal counsel. They are exercising their right to summon witnesses before the commission. Apparently they intend to fight to clear their names from the hint of responsibility the commission has placed on them for faults that may have led to the crash.

It is expected that the officers will summon senior commanders, including OC Air Force Maj.-Gen. Eitan Ben-Eliyahu, who has reportedly sought legal counsel.

The four officers are Brig.-Gen. G, commander of the Tel Nof air base, where the CH-53 squadrons are based; Yasur squadron commander Lt.-Col. E.; E's deputy, Maj. Y; and the operations officer for the Galilee Panhandle, Brig.-Maj. A.

Winning cards

The winning cards in yesterday's daily Mifal Hapayis Chance draw were the ace of spades, jack of hearts, eight of diamonds and jack of clubs.



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